

CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING
IN ART EDUCATION:
A CASE STUDY

By

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Abstract: Providing all students with equitable educational opportunities is a challenge that all schools face in the 21st century due to diverse student populations. Research indicates that the arts provide an effective means for motivating student learning.

Unfortunately, in many schools, the arts are often eliminated due to budget pitfalls and testing requirements, leading to increased marginalization of diverse student bodies. As schools grow in diversity, multicultural education fails to meet the needs of a diverse student bodies. Instead, culturally responsive teaching proposes a more effective approach to addressing the varied needs of a diverse student bodies. This study examines art education through the lens of Geneva Gay's culturally responsive teaching.

According to Gay, there are four basic that components that help define culturally responsive teaching, which are "caring, communication, curriculum, and caring" (Gay, 2010). The study reveals how these four components are used by teachers to address the varied learning needs of diverse art students in two different large urban high schools located in the same district.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The philosophy and practices associated with multi-cultural education were initially used to address the varied needs of diverse students. The inclusion of multi-cultural education gave way to ceremonies and special events that commemorated differing cultural customs and belief systems (Banks, 2004; Gay, 2013). Although multicultural initiatives have been somewhat beneficial because they made students aware of cultural differences, many of the learning needs of students have not been addressed. In many schools, the disparity in academic performance among different student groups still persists (Achievement, 2011; Maye, 2011). To address the achievement gap more readily, there must be a shift towards culturally responsive teaching in educational practice (Gay, 2013; Taylor & Sobel, 2011).

Unlike multicultural education where cultural differences are briefly mentioned, culturally responsive teaching addresses the educational needs of students using cultural referents as the foundation for further study (Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 2009). Ladson-Billings described an approach to teaching that “empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes” (Coffee, 2008, p.1; Ladson-Billings, 2009, p. 20). Through this method of teaching the whole child, teachers connect the home and school lives of students while providing an education that meets state and district curricular requirements (Coffee, 2008; Gay, 2000).

Culturally responsive teaching fosters deeper levels of racial and ethnic understanding (Jackson, 2012; Lee, 2012). A leader in this field, Geneva Gay, defines culturally responsive teaching “as using the cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspectives of ethnically diverse students as conduits for teaching them more effectively” (Gay, 2002, p. 106). This definition denotes that effective teaching responds to the different “characteristics, experiences, and perspectives” that make each individual student unique (Gay, 2002, p. 106). Teaching in this manner means looking after the specific cultural characteristics that make each student uniquely different from each other as well as the teacher (Rychly, 2012). These cultural characteristics incorporate “values, traditions, and languages” and encompass different types of learning styles, relationship norms, and forms of communication (Rychly, 2012, p. 44).

Gay adapts her insight about culture from anthropologist, George Spindler. To Spindler (1989), the transmission of culture occurs when groups of people “try to make sense of their own lives and sense of behaviors of other people with whom they have to deal” (Spindler, p.1). Thusly, culturally responsive teaching helps students make sense out of their own lives as well as each other’s. In this way, respect for diversity is fostered and student-learning needs are met (Rychly, 2012). The definition of culture that further supports Spindler’s view of culture and Gay’s culturally responsive teaching that will be used in this study comes from Matsumoto and Juang. According to their definition, culture is “a unique meaning and information system, shared by a group and transmitted across generations” (Matsumoto, 2007; Matsumoto & Juang, 2007).

To be effective, culturally responsive teaching must be an integral part of the school curriculum (Gay, 2002). Often more than other subjects, however, the arts permit individual expression and creativity, which are largely rooted in one’s cultural background (Lai, 2012). The arts can serve as a platform from which integration of culturally responsive teaching can occur (Lai, 2012). Since culture and identity can be linked through art, the arts play a significant role in the development of education that is responsive to the needs of diverse learners (Hodgson, n.d.). Within visual art classroom, numerous interactions take place, “Students come to understand cultural

diversity, social inclusion, and antiracist behaviors” (Lee, 2012, p.1). Student learning occurs through multiple ways and having an appropriate response to these ways is crucial in effective teaching (Lee, 2012). Art teachers must also know that racial experience largely impacts how each person sees the world (Lee, 2012).

Culturally responsive art teachers allow students to broaden their own perspectives, while exploring the various cultures that are present in the world around them (Banks, 2004; Chanda, 1992). In culturally responsive teaching, the arts have potential to deepen understanding for subject matter, while providing the defining characteristics found in each culture. Art instruction that incorporates, culturally responsive teaching allows students to broaden their own perspectives, while exploring the various cultures that are present in the world around them (Banks, 2004; Chanda, 1992).

Problem Statement

The United States public school system was founded upon the principle that all people, regardless of culture, gender or any special circumstance are entitled to a quality education. However, modern day schools have more diverse student populations than ever before, and some educators are more successful than others in addressing the needs of this diverse student body (Banks, 2004; Bartel, 2012). Moore and Hansen (2012) posit that today’s educators must create culturally sensitive learning environments, develop positive relationships, and design learning strategies that motivate all students to learn.

Gay (2013) refers to this kind of teaching as culturally responsive, which allow students to be aware of cultures outside of their own experiences and addresses the varied needs of diverse students. Culturally responsive teaching applies to all subject areas. However, the arts are a powerful means, and some believe the best means, for reaching, motivating, and teaching all students (National visual arts standards, 2014; Rollins, 1994). This study addresses how visual art teachers who engage in culturally responsive teaching strategies design meaningful and effective learning experiences for diverse learners (Banks, 2004; Gay, 2013; Jackson, 2012; Lee, 2012).

Purpose of the Study

This study examines culturally responsive teaching in art education in selected high school visual arts classes.

Research Questions

The research questions guiding this study are:

1. How do art teachers carry out culturally responsive teaching?
2. How is culturally responsive teaching in the art classroom supported by the administration?
3. What other findings are pertinent to culturally responsive teaching?

Theoretical Framework

Constructivism is the epistemological foundation of the study. The basis of constructivism posits that existing knowledge provides the foundation for understanding and receiving new information (Applefield, 2000; Bruner, 2004). According to constructivist theory, the conception of all knowledge is based upon one's ability to interpret the world. Culture significantly influences these interpretations (Takaya, 2008; Bruner, 2008). At the same time, cultural influences play a major role in providing the context for new interpretation (Applefield, 2000; Bruner, 2008). Like Gay (2002), Bruner views culture as a multi-layered phenomenon that embodies the ways in which people live and think.

In constructivism, the manner in which learning is presented and supported is essential. Dialogue stimulates knowledge acquisition in the form of challenging, explaining, and questioning (Applefield, 2000). Supporting learners and providing timely feedback also play a major role. Group learning provides the social interaction needed to support knowledge acquisition (Applefield, 2000).

Multiple case studies were used in this study. The lens used to explore and analyze these cases was the culturally responsive teaching model designed by Gay (2010). Culturally responsive teaching uses cultural orientations, previous experiences, and performance styles to design meaningful and effective learning experiences for students (Gay, 2010). This framework provided a

systematic means to orchestrate curriculum, methodologies, and instructional materials to fit specific learning needs of diverse learners. According to Gay, there are four characteristics associated with culturally responsive teaching: “caring, communication, curriculum, and instruction” (Gay, 2010, p. xix). There is no priority ranking among these characteristics. Rather all of these characteristics are equally as important for addressing the varied needs of diverse learners. Under each characteristic of culturally responsive teaching different criteria exist that help teachers establish effective methodologies and approaches that impact student success.

Caring

Caring refers to the development of the interpersonal relationship found between teachers and students. The criteria for caring include: “patience, persistence, facilitation, validations, and empowerment” (Gay, 2010, p. 49).

Communication

The communication that takes place in culturally responsive teaching can be summarized as the ability to understand beyond the spoken word. Thus, discerning meaning of the unspoken word is understood through knowledge of cultural background (Gay, 2010). According to Gay (2010), communication involves “much more than the content and structure of written and spoken language” (Gay, 2010, p. 79). Communication goes beyond words, entailing “sociocultural context and nuances, discourse logic and dynamics, delivery styles, social functions, role expectations, and norms of interactions” (Gay, 2010, p. 79).

Curriculum

Curriculum must be relevant to student life and experiences. Such curriculum empowers students to achieve success (Gay, 2010).

Instruction

Through effective instruction, all students can learn (Kea, 2006; Gay, 2010). According to Gay, instruction must be organized through scaffolding, where existing knowledge is connected to new knowledge. Culture directs the modification of instruction. However, instruction is adapted to

student learning styles (Gay, 2010). When teaching styles are matched with student need, bridges of understanding are constructed. From the multiple instructional strategies to instruction and assessment approaches, there is the promotion of self-knowing through self-assessment, and the establishment of goals (Gay, 2010). The illustration below shows the four characteristics of culturally responsive teaching as defined by Dr. Geneva Gay.

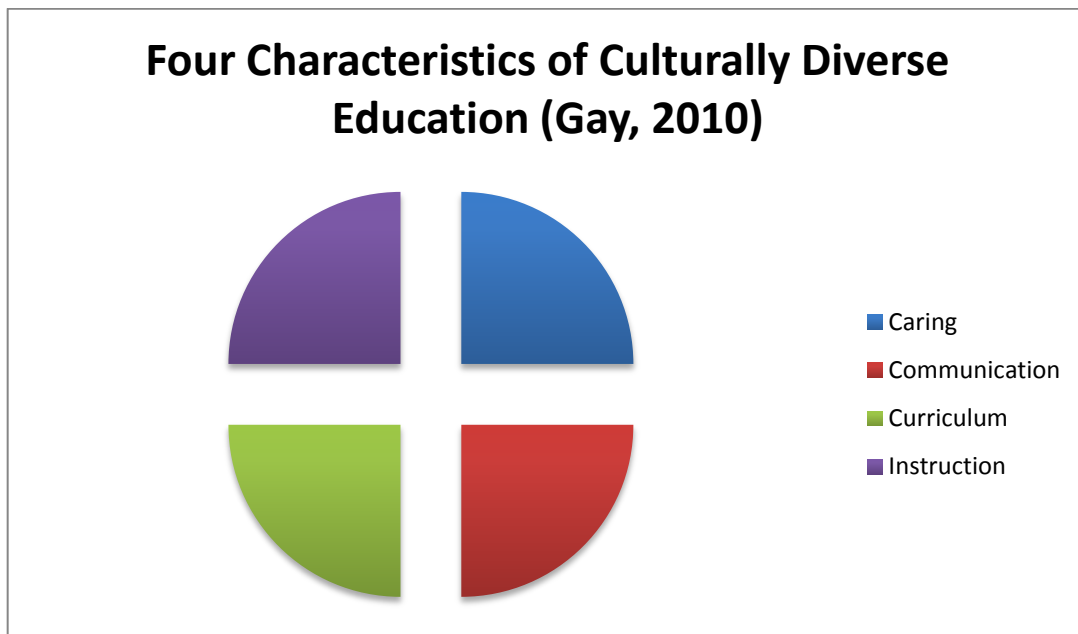


Figure 1. Illustration of Gay’s Four Characteristics (Gay, 2010)

Research Methods

Case study research was the empirical method of inquiry for this study. Case studies allowed the researcher to explore “a program, event, activity, process, or one more individuals in depth” (Creswell, 2010). Through prolonged engagement with subject matter, this investigative approach is a means for researchers to capture the complexities that surround culturally responsive teaching (Hyatt, 2014). By compiling detailed information from multiple data sources, I used the case study approach to spotlight culturally responsive teaching in visual arts classes (Creswell, 2010).

I studied two different high schools located in the same district for my case studies. Six visual art teachers and three administrators were interviewed. Participants were professionals with

extensive knowledge and backgrounds with the visual arts and cultural diversity. I collected data from site observations, teacher interviews, and pertinent documents. Case narratives described the manifestation of cultural responsive teaching and the manifestation of cultural diversity in visual arts classes.

To ensure trustworthiness, I collected data from a variety of sources, including classroom observations and teacher interviews as a means to achieve credibility in the study. Credibility was established through peer debriefing, triangulation, and through the verification of transcription accuracy from those participating in the study. All data from the study were and are readily available for audit.

Potential Significance of the Study

To Practice

Because many teachers feel inadequate when dealing with issues of race and culture, they often fail to provide effective learning opportunities for all students (Curtis, 1998; Lee, 2013). Without proper training, teachers become overwhelmed with the many cultural differences found in a single classroom. The study provided examples of culturally diverse teaching. The results of the study can show teachers how to develop culturally responsive teaching in the visual arts.

To Research

As part of extensive research regarding culturally diverse education, culturally responsive teaching, specifically, provides teachers with a systematic approach for developing equal learning opportunities for all students. Although this systematic approach may be helpful, more research must be done with real life experiences regarding the actual application of the process. This current study will provide two narrative stories of teachers who actively engage in culturally diverse education.

To Theory

Using culture as a means to build upon existing knowledge has been part of many educational theories for decades (Takaya, 2008; Bruner, 2008). As part of these theories, culturally responsive teaching is becoming part of current teacher practice. The results from the study add to existing

research on culturally responsive teaching and the significant role that the visual arts have in culturally diverse education.

Definition of Terms

Caring

Gay (2010) wrote, “Interpersonal relationships are characterized by patience, persistence, facilitation, validations, and empowerment” (p. 49). Research indicates that highly effective teachers have caring interpersonal relationships with students (Gay, 2010). Since one’s own cultural background and experiences affect behavior, caring teachers must examine their negative attitudes toward certain social groups to effectively teach all students. Research also indicates that caring for students includes “rightness, fairness, and equality” (Gay, 2010, p. 49). To be highly effective in a culturally diverse environment, teachers must examine their own sociocultural identities, existing inequalities between social classes, and negative attitudes they may have toward certain cultural groups (Kea, 2006).

Communication

Communication is “the imparting or interchange of thoughts, opinions, or information by speech, writing, or signs” (communication. n.d.). According to Gay (2010), communication involves “much more than the content and structure of written and spoken language” (p. 79). Communication goes beyond words, entailing “sociocultural context and nuances, discourse logic and dynamics, delivery styles, social functions, role expectations, and norms of interactions” (Gay, 2010, p. 79).

Culture

Culture is defined as “a unique meaning and information system, shared by a group and transmitted across generations” (Matsumoto, 2007; Matsumoto & Juang, 2007). Culture occurs through the process that takes place when groups of people “try to make sense of their own lives and sense of behaviors of other people with whom they have to deal” (Spindler, 1989, p.1).

Cultural Diversity

Research indicates that cultural diversity focuses on the disparities found in “academic achievement between mainstream students and students who are marginalized within the schools” (Gay, 2010, p.x). These students come from diverse racial, ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and social class groups (Gay, 2010). Educators in the 21st century must educate students according to their needs, which may include cultural differences, languages, abilities, and other characteristics (Richards, 2006).

Culturally responsive teaching or culturally sensitive pedagogy

Culturally responsive teaching is a systematic approach that supplies hope and provides guidance to teachers for improving academic achievement of students from diverse racial, ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and social class groups (Gay, 2010). Culturally responsive education acknowledges the power of teaching while recognizing that teaching alone is not enough “to accomplish the systematic reforms needed for ethnically diverse students to receive genuine educational equity and achieve excellence” (Gay, 2010). Culturally responsive teaching uses “cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant to and effective for them” (Gay, 2010, p. 31).

Curriculum

According to Gay, culturally responsive teaching empowers ethnically diverse students to achieve academic success (Gay, 2010). Knowledge of curriculum is central to this empowerment. For effective teaching, new knowledge must be connected with student lives and experiences beyond the school walls (Gay, 2010). In culturally diverse teaching, educators learn about student experiences, community, and culture to develop relationships among students. Teachers use these experiences in the context of teaching as a means to impact student learning (Kea, 2006).

Cultural Heritage

Cultural heritage refers to a vast corpus of artifacts whether artistic or symbolic, giving a particular group of people identification (Jokilehto, 2005).

De-sensing

Teachers must engage in “de-sensing” in order to open the mind. A teacher needs to identify and reflect on his or her own cultural beliefs and understand how these systems impact their view of students (Dray, 2011).

Emotional Intelligence

There are four major areas that define emotional intelligence. These include: (1). the ability to perceive accurately, appraise and express emotion; (2) the ability to access and/or generate feelings when they facilitate thought; (3) the ability to understand emotion and emotional knowledge; and (4) the ability to regulate emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth is one’s ability to manage emotions (Mayer, 1990).

Instruction

The constructivist form of instruction involves the promotion of “critical thinking, problem solving, collaboration, and the recognition of multiple perspectives” (Kea, 2006, p. 6). Constructivist philosophy contends that all students can learn by the use of scaffolding previous knowledge with that which is to be taught (Gay, 2010; Kea, 2006). Teachers use scaffolding to build upon existing knowledge and to construct new knowledge. Within the constructivist epistemological view of knowledge acquisition, all students are capable of learning. Culturally responsive teaching incorporates culturally responsive teaching strategies, resources, instructional materials, and student learning styles as methods to construct knowledge (Gay, 2000; Kea, 2006). To develop effective instruction, teachers examine their curriculum from multiple perspectives in order to deliver meaningful instruction for all students (Kea, 2006). As a result, “an inclusive classroom environment is created” (Kea, 2006, p. 6).

Self-Concept

At any point in time, a person comes into his or her self-concept by constructing a sense of who he or she is through the interaction of others (Rohall, 2007).

Social Intelligence

Social intelligence refers to one's ability to understand how to act wisely and get along with others (Cantor, 2011; Moss, 1927).

Underservedness

Underservedness occurs when “a set of material conditions and cultural articulations within social, political, and economic institutions, policies, and practices” impede particular student groups from wholly utilizing and profiting from quality education, including art experiences (Kraehe, 2013, p.29).

Unframing

The act of “unframing” refers to a person's ability to consider the different perspectives associated with culture (Donahue, 2011).

Summary

The constructivist curriculum provides definitive reasoning for supporting a culturally responsive teaching system within the visual arts. This study explored how culturally responsive teaching is manifested in selected high school visual art classes. The study also explored culturally responsive teaching as a viable means for supporting an enriched visual art experience for all students. The following literature review explores the need for culturally enriched curriculum as a means for promoting greater student outcomes, while it discusses current methodologies that are used among teachers.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Providing an equal and equitable education for diverse cultures is a challenge that schools face in the 21st century (Banks, n.d.). In order to improve student achievement in schools with a diverse population, school organizations must be transformed in ways that meet the needs of all students (Banks, n.d.; Shaw, 1997). Much research indicates that if the existing trends do not change, students from diverse cultures will not obtain the necessary skills to fully function in society (Bowman, 1994). A study from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NEAP) reported that differences in test scores among children of color and lowered socioeconomic appear early. Children from diverse cultural and low socioeconomic backgrounds regularly score below national standards (Bowman, 1994). Research reveals that as students' progress through school, there is a larger discrepancy in academic achievement among the different ethnic groups (Bowman, 1994). In time, the possibilities for academic success decline among poor minority students (Bowman, 1994).

In 2002, national officials signed into law No Child Left Behind (NCLB) mandating that schools be accountable for the quality of education received among students (Durden, 2008). The push was to improve educational quality by providing equal educational opportunities for minority and the disadvantaged students (Durden, 2008). Predominantly, at risk students "represent a diverse body of students that come from low performing and high poverty schools" (Durden, 2008, p. 403). A student's "primary language, ethnicity and social class" are key characteristics that determine diversity (Durden, 2008, p. 404). The distinctively different student

bodies have become the trademark in classrooms across the American educational system (Durden, 2008). For example, the number of students speaking another language rose from 3.8 to 10.6 million between the years 1979-2005. In addition, 42% of school age children represent students who come from ethnically diverse populations (Durden, 2008). Moreover, “in 2005, 48% black, 49% of Hispanic and 36% of American Indian students” came from schools with that have the highest measurements of poverty (Durden, 2008, p. 404). When 75% or more students receive free or reduced lunches, the school is considered to be in the highest poverty level (Durden, 2008).

Measures have been taken to address the problems associated with the education received among diverse students in low performing schools. Current research indicates that new policies projected to improve student achievement have limited or removed fine arts classes (Baker, 2012). States like Louisiana have permitted students to exempt fine arts classes to allow more time on improving math and reading test scores (Baker, 2012; Sabol, 2010). Despite extensive brain research, educational leaders have viewed art as being insignificant since it is not a tested area under NCLB. As a result, efforts to provide the necessary remediation of diverse groups, has resulted in a narrowing of educational opportunities for the “underserved.”

Since the focus of NCLB has been on improving core subjects, there has been great concern that not all students are served equal educational experiences. Attempting to solve these educational disproportions, the President’s Committee on Arts and Humanities published a report in 2011 that assembled a case for redirecting educational policies and practices concerning the inequities found in arts education. The published report supported the argument that “students in schools that are most challenged and serving the highest need student populations often, have the fewest arts opportunities” (President’s Committee to the Arts and the Humanities, 2011, p.32). This announcement echoed the Obama administration’s amassed awareness and acknowledgement of the negative effects that curriculum and economic compression have had on

arts education for a majority of public school students, particularly the “underserved populations” (Kraehe, 2013, p. 300).

Many African-American teachers believe that the improvement initiatives that have been implemented through liberal means have merely secured the quality of education the for liberals’ students (Curtis, 1998). From their perspectives, most teachers abandon responsibilities for social change after they go home at the end of the day (Curtis, 1998). Those people operating with good intentions appear to be suspicious of hidden agendas. As a result, any social changes or liberating ideals are simply minimal (Curtis, 1998).

Since the connection between social change and education persists, many African-American teachers feel that recent educational reforms were not designed for the needs of children with color (Curtis, 1998). Many view improvements as schemes to ensure the failure of diversified students (Curtis, 1998). Removing fine arts classes supports these views.

Making a difference in society motivates teachers to teach. However, new federal policies have greatly discouraged their efforts. Studies reveal that 73% of the art teacher respondents felt that NCLB had negatively impacted attitudes (Sabol, 2010). Another, 89% felt that NCLB did not positively affect faculty morale (Sabol, 2010). Stringent testing requirements have 67% respondents to believe that NCLB does not make better learners (Sabol, 2010). Many respondents claimed that testing has narrowed students’ learning interests. According to these respondents, students want to know precisely what will be tested and consider other information pointless (Sabol, 2010). Ultimately, respondents feel that NCLB has contributed to lowered quality student work (Sabol, 2010).

Rather than merely graduating students, schools must learn to educate students appropriately by providing them equal education opportunities. Simply removing art classes robs students of a well-rounded education (Blatt-Gross, 2010). Research reveals that students in 25% of the lowest socioeconomic status receiving considerate arts studies perform at a higher level than those students with fewer arts experience (Baker, 2012). Literature reviews regarding the

effects of art education also make known the positive relationship between the arts and other academic subjects (Baker, 2012). The arts link and generate knowledge and make learning meaningful, which is a critical factor to providing an enriched curriculum that supports core academic disciplines (Baker, 2012).

Culturally Responsive Teaching

Researchers concerned about the disparities found in education have developed cultural difference theories that have significant implications for teaching (Rychly, 2012). These researchers have constructed a theory known as culturally responsive teaching, also known as culturally responsive pedagogy, as the means to provide hope for educators trying to make a difference in today's culturally diverse schools (Rychly, 2012). Culturally responsive teaching is a systematic strategy to improve academic achievement for students from ethnically diverse backgrounds who have long been marginalized in schools. Student academic achievement improves when schools and teachers learn to draw and reflect on cultural strengths (Gay, 2010).

Culturally responsive teaching encompasses all subjects in the developing students to be successful citizens (Gay, 2010; Rychly, 2012). Subjects, like the arts, have the unique ability to develop the emotional intelligence, which is needed in culturally responsive teaching. Research reveals that students in 25% of the lowest socioeconomic status receiving considerable arts studies perform at higher levels. The arts can link and generate knowledge as well as make learning meaningful, which are critical factors to providing an enriched curriculum that supports core academic disciplines (Baker, 2012). The arts provide understanding for the world and its many cultures (Garvey, 2009). Instead of eliminating programs, the arts can enhance a culturally diverse environment by providing the needed cultural links that empowers student learning (Blatt-Gross, 2010). The arts have a vital place in helping students become well-adjusted citizens who contribute to society (Garvey, 2009).

Multicultural Education vs. Culturally Responsive Teaching

Table 1

Multicultural Education versus Culturally Responsive Teaching

Multicultural Education	Culturally Responsive Teaching
Multicultural education serves students from a homogenous cultural background present in the classroom.	Culturally responsive teaching serves students from diverse cultural backgrounds present in the classroom.
Teachers present different cultural perspectives.	Teachers connect new information to student background knowledge and respond to the ways in which students learn naturally.
	Teachers determine if their own cultural backgrounds will interfere with lesson design.

Note. Adapted from Becoming culturally responsive educators: Rethinking education pedagogy [Pamphlet]. Phoenix, AZ: NCREst, by Kea, C., Campbell-Whatley, G., & Richards, H., 2006; Teacher characteristics for culturally responsive pedagogy, by Rychly, L., & Graves, E., 2012, *Multicultural Perspectives*, 14(1), 44-49; A framework for culturally responsive teaching. *Educational Leadership*. 53(1), 17-21, by Wlodkowski, R., & Ginsberg, M. 1995.

Clear distinctions must be drawn between culturally responsive teaching and multicultural education (Rychly, 2002). Both systems help schools integrate diversity into all areas of the curriculum through cultural referents (Curtis, 1998; Kea 2006). However, culturally responsive teaching travels beyond the cultural referents to deeper levels of understanding. Culturally responsive teaching is designed to specifically assist the classroom teacher (Kea, 2006). Many times, teachers do not know how to provide lessons that promote equal opportunities for students (Kea, 2006). Culturally responsive teaching is a step by step process that empowers teachers to more readily meet the needs of their students (Kea, 2006).

Unlike multicultural education, responsive teachers carefully consider their own cultural beliefs and biases before designing lessons (Kea, 2006). This essential step helps teachers respond to the many different perspectives held by students coming from diverse cultural backgrounds. Another important step is that responsive teachers reflect on how the subject matter

has been historically been taught (Kea, 2006). If subject matter is distorted or obscured, responsive teachers select new methods that provide educational equality (Kea, 2006).

The system of multicultural education is somewhat helpful in that it introduces the good of cultural difference into a homogeneous student body. The approach is beneficial to making main stream people aware of people coming from diverse cultural backgrounds (Wlodkowski, 1995). Multicultural education tends to break down as diversity increases in schools. The breakdown occurs when teachers fail to respond to the diverse cultural cues given by students. Evidence reveals that when teachers ignore student behavioral norms and forms of communication, students resist learning (Wlodkowski, 1995).

Culturally responsive teaching motivates students to take an active role in learning. Student motivation takes place through a wide variety of reasons. Students are motivated to learn because culturally responsive teaching builds upon prior knowledge (Rychly). With culturally responsive teaching, cultural cues are used as blocks for learning (Rychly, 2012). In addition, culturally responsive teaching stimulates student learning because of it a holistic approach to education that embraces different learning styles. The holistic approach makes learning meaningful and is most effective for motivating diverse learners (Wlodkowski, 1995). This comprehensive approach to learning bridges and crosses disciplines (Wlodkowski, 1995).

Four Conditions to Culturally Responsive Teaching

Researchers Raymond Wlodkowski and Margery Ginsberg propose a framework for culturally responsive teaching that is based on intrinsic motivation. In this comprehensive model, respect for cultural differences is fostered while simultaneously a common culture is cultivated in the classroom that all students accept (Wlodkowski, 1995). Their framework provides four conditions that are present in culturally responsive teaching. These are:

1. Establish inclusion
2. Developing attitude
3. Enhancing meaning

4. Engendering competence (Wlodkowski, 1995).

The first one is to “establish inclusion” (Wlodkowski, 1995, p. 19). For inclusion to occur, teachers must cultivate an atmosphere within the classroom where both they and their students feel respected and connected (Wlodkowski, 1995). The second one is “developing attitude” (Wlodkowski, 1995, p.19). There must be a positive attitude toward the learning experience. Teachers can cultivate a positive attitude by making learning relevant to learners and by giving students choices (Wlodkowski, 1995). Essentially, students should have some say deciding what is learned. The third one is to “enhance meaning” (Wlodkowski, 1995, p. 19). Students need to be challenged through thoughtful learning experiences that include student viewpoints and values. The fourth one is “engendering competence,” which comes through an understanding that students can be effective when learning something they value (Wlodkowski, 1995, p. 19).

Geneva Gay, Culturally Responsive Teaching

An expert in field of culturally responsive education, Geneva Gay defines cultural diversity as “using the characteristics, experiences, and perspectives of ethnically diverse students as conduits for teaching them more effectively” (Rychly, 2012, p. 1). Culturally responsive education can be viewed as joining appropriate teaching strategies to the distinguishing cultural characteristics found among diverse students (Rychly, 2012). These specific “cultural characteristics include commonly thought of concepts such as values, traditions, language, communication, learning styles, and relationship norms” (Rychly, 2012, page #44).

According to Gay, culturally responsive education contains four vital factors. These are: caring, communication, curriculum, and instruction.

Caring. Gay (2010) provides characteristics of caring in the interpersonal relationship that a teacher has with his or her student. These characteristics include: “patience, persistence, and facilitation, validation, and empowerment” (Gay, 2010, p. 49). In the case of uncaring relationships, there is “impatience, intolerance, dictations, and control” (Gay, 2010, p. 49).

Caring relationships hold tremendous power in the case of instructional effectiveness (Gay, 2010). Research indicates that teachers who authentically care for students produce greater levels of success than those who do not (Gay, 2010). These teachers have high expectations for students and simply do not settle for anything less (Gay, 2010).

According to Gay (2010), many educators know that caring is an attribute that is most effective in working with students. However, they are at a loss when it comes to caring effectively for students of diverse backgrounds. Gay claims there is a difference between “caring about” and “caring for.” Caring about is one’s concern for another’s sense of well-being, whereas, “caring for” pertains to one’s active engagement in process taken to positively affect it (Gay, 2010). Both, however, are interrelated. Responsive caring envelops “a combination of concern, compassion, commitment, responsibility, and action” (Gay, 2010, p. 48).

Caring is an integral part of culturally responsive teaching for students of diverse ethnic backgrounds (Gay, 2010). Caring is manifested in a “teacher attitudes, expectations, and behaviors” (Gay, 2010, P. 48). With culturally responsive teaching, teachers view students as people. By holding students in high esteem, teachers are concerned about student well-being. At the same time, teachers honor students’ humanity, have high expectations, and use the necessary strategies to ensure the success of all students (Gay, 2010). In this caring relationship, teachers can administer “tough love” when needed to help students achieve their highest potential (Hammond, 2013).

Research in the area of neuroscience reveals that caring is as an essential component needed for effective learning (Hammond, 2013). When people are cared for, the brain is saturated with hormones and neurotransmitters, such as oxytocin. This hormone bonds mothers to their babies even after the pain of childbirth (Hammond, 2013). These hormones inform the pre-frontal cortex, which is place of thought in the brain, that all is safe in environment. When students feel safe, they can learn (Hammond, 2013).

Research indicates that interaction that takes place between teachers and students largely determines the quality of education received (Gay, 2010). Sadly, some teachers do not have positive attitudes towards students of diverse ethnic backgrounds (Wlodkowski, 1995). Some teachers hold “racial biases, ethnic stereotyping, cultural ethnocentrism, and personal rejection. Teachers, who do not care, “have the tendency to devalue, demean, and even fear students” of diverse ethnic origin (Gay, 2010, 48).

According to Gay, culturally responsive caring is centered on teaching technique. For culturally responsive education to exist, Gay (2010) expresses that teachers must have high performance expectations for students and be diligent in promoting their achievement. Culturally responsive teaching is rooted in “caring, commitment, and an understanding that school performance takes place within a complex sociocultural ecology and is filtered through cultural scenes both students and teachers bring to the classroom” (Gay, 2010, p. 69). Since cultural differences exist, teachers should not assume that caring and cultural responsiveness will naturally emerge from the “professional ethics or the altruism of teachers” (Gay, 2010, p. 69). Rather, culturally responsive caring must be cultivated. Caring requires that teachers engage in acquiring knowledge about the cultures that exist within the classroom as well as their own social viewpoints (Gay, 2010).

Research provides a multitude of pedagogical tools that culturally responsive teachers may use in the classroom. Such methods help teachers reach students, but without careful analysis of teacher belief systems the usage of such methods is pointless. To ensure greater success, teachers must engage self-analysis to determine their beliefs regarding a student’s cultural differences, race, and intellectual abilities (Gay, 2010). Teachers must examine expectations that they have for students from different ethnic groups; the expectations they hold for students from different ethnic groups; and how their beliefs and expectations are manifested in instruction.

Gay indicates that cultural therapy is highly valuable for implementing culturally responsive teaching. Cultural therapy makes one cognitively conscious of his or her belief systems (Donahue, 2011; Spindler, 1989). By bringing to light embedded beliefs, one can analyze the different cultural behaviors that exist outside of his or her own. Such knowledge empowers teachers through knowledge of self (Gay, 2010). The information achieved through cultural therapy enlightens teachers that the presumed belief systems regarding groups can often times be erroneous (Gay, 2010).

Communication. Another characteristic of culturally responsive teaching, as identified by Gay (2010), is cultural communication in the classroom. First and foremost, culture equips one with the tools needed to find significance and provides one the ability to understand others (Gay, 2010). Culture is a powerful influence to the communication styles that exist among ethnic differences (Gay, 2010). According to Gay (2010), Asian American's encourage conformity, hold authority in high esteem, and have indirect ways of showing expression.

Understanding the differences found in communication within the classroom is imperative for ensuring the success of all students. Gay (2010) claims that many decisions made through the school organization are greatly dependent on communication. When students are not adept in their ability to communicate and teachers fail to understand cultural differences, student learning can be misdiagnosed and learning needs may be mismatched (Gay, 2010). Students of cultural difference may be truly communicating much more than a teacher is able to realize and understand (Gay, 2010).

Far beyond the linguistic behavior associated with teaching, there is the quality of performance that students reveal following instruction. Student performance mirrors a teacher's ability to communicate desired expectations effectively (Gay, 2010). Teachers failing to understand the different styles of communication that can exist within a language can negatively affect the learning received among students of different ethnic groups.

Culturally responsive education does not undermine the need for a common language in American schools. However, this form of educating students enables other forms of communicating with the language to co-exist. Much research has been conducted on the positive effects of providing language support for students of diverse ethnic backgrounds. In some cases, Hispanic students who receive instruction in their native tongues improved in the areas of reading and writing, but not in the areas of science and math (Gay, 2010).

Gay indicates in her research that culturally responsive teaching needs to part of a pre-service teacher education to bring about positive changes in schools. According to Gay, this time of teacher development is crucial to a teacher's career (Gay, 2010). During this time, teachers form their methods and opinions regarding teaching. She adds that culturally responsive teaching should be continuously cultivated during teacher in service professional development (Gay, 2010). Since students from diverse backgrounds have been historically underachieving academically, time is of the essence in developing teachers who are culturally responsive.

Gay's research reveals that culturally responsive teaching must be consistently part of all subjects taught in school for students to fully benefit. Supportive evidence reveals that culturally responsive teaching addresses student development academically, psychologically, emotionally, socially, morally, politically, and helps students acquire cultural skills (Gay, 2010). Culturally responsive schools cultivate student success without inhibiting ethnic identity (Gay, 2010). Rather, the process of being culturally responsive assists student in becoming confident and competent citizens.

Culturally responsive teaching provides for both integrative and comprehensive methods of educating students. This type of educating assists teachers by tapping into the culturally diverse curriculum that can provide an enriched learning experience for all students (Gay, 2010).

By utilizing the principles, trends, and patterns of various cultural groups responsive teaching fosters a sense of community among students. By aiding students in the recognition of similarities and differences found among people, students learn to communicate effectively (Gay,

2010). The student camaraderie that occurs through responsive teaching promotes collaboration through mutual respect and well-being, while simultaneously advancing students academically (Gay, 2010).

By helping students develop understanding for one another, responsive teaching advances civil rights through fostering intolerance for the different kinds of discrimination and oppression that exist within society. Through culturally responsive teaching, students gain the courage that they need to advance themselves academically, socially, culturally. At the same time, students are empowered to seek justice for different political groups (Gay, 2010).

Curriculum. Gay (2010) indicates that the central purpose of culturally responsive pedagogy is to empower students of color through academic achievement, culture, and self-efficacy (Gay, 2010). For curriculum to be successful, the content must be connected student life outside of school (Gay, 2010). Gay also states that if learning is to greatly impact students, the content must interrelated to the interests, needs, dreams, and student purpose (Gay, 2010; Wlodkowski, 1995). Curriculum content is used to help students build upon existing strengths. This construction of knowledge emphasizes current and future abilities (Gay, 2010). According to Gay, students must be co-directors and co-designers of their education. Students of color must be jointly involved in curriculum content. Otherwise, students are reduced to consumers and the quality of education received is quite restricted (Gay, 2010). Gay (2010) adds that curriculum should not be only those things, which are of personal interest to students, nor should they be involved in every decision made in regards to curriculum content (Gay, 2010). However, the culturally enriched curriculum should be delivered to students in meaningful ways (Gay, 2010).

Gay (2010) indicates that there is six components to providing an enriched culturally enriched curriculum. These are as follows:

1. The curriculum content is essential to academic performance and culturally responsive teaching.

2. One of the most common sources for curriculum content is the textbook. Thus, textbooks must be good quality.
3. Curriculum content must be meaningful for improved student learning.
4. Content must be relevant to student cultural backgrounds including histories and contributions and viewpoints.
5. Curriculum content comes from multiple sources, many of which are outside the school.
6. Many kinds of curriculum exist that are different, yet challenging for students.

(Gay, 2010)

Instruction. Culture largely influences student learning. However, not all students from the same culture learn in the same manner (Gay, 2010). Learning characteristics that come through cultural understanding can provide direction in which to design curriculum (Gay, 2010). Associating teaching styles to diverse learning practices, teachers connect with the different cultures and communities. Teachers must remain fluid while developing instruction because many different variables are at play when making students successful (Gay, 2010). In other words, student needs can be very different. The type of student depicts the curriculum content and how it is to be taught.

According to Gay (2010), instruction is the action of blending the components of culturally responsive teaching into meaningful configurations to promote learning for all students. She claims that teaching interactions between teachers and students both indirectly and directly is essential for learning. Gay (2010) notes that unfortunately, effectiveness in instruction can become marginalized by the inequalities found in “rules and protocols governing interactions in different cultural systems” (p. 175).

Culturally responsive teaching works through scaffolding. Existing knowledge are identified and is the starting place for the construction of new knowledge (Gay, 2010). Learning builds upon previous successes and is much easier when it is connected to existing knowledge. The organizational approach to learning found in scaffolding affects how one masters new

knowledge (Gay, 2010). In presenting instruction, curriculum must be presented in an organized manner to maximize student performance (Gay, 2010).

Through responsive teaching, achievement is viewed as multi-dimensional and uses many kinds of assessments for revealing student performance among ethnic groups. Importantly, responsive teaching promotes the self-knowing through self-assessment. By providing a multitude of indicators that provide for student successes, responsive teaching fosters a genuine concern and caring for students of diverse backgrounds. Responsive teaching demands increased student performance through the facilitation of high teacher expectations (Gay, 2010). By helping students establish goals, students are more readily able to develop skills that are needed for successful futures.

History of Cultural Inclusiveness

Historically, culturally responsive teaching is not new. The Merriam Report, which was a study conducted in 1928, covered the living conditions of the Native Americans. The implications found in the report strongly support the ideology behind culturally responsive education (Applefield, 2000). The Merriam Report indicated, “Curriculum must not be uniform or standardized” (Merriam, 1928, p. 33). Essentially, the uniformity and standardization of curriculum taught did not support the Indian ways of life. Since the Indians could not relate to the white customs, the method of “white” instruction being forced was meaningless. As a result, the academic performance of Indian students was poor. The report also suggested that teachers must be free to gather curricula about the life of the American Indians. The Merriam Report indicated the need to make learning meaningful by building upon the existing knowledge that is relevant to learners (Merriam, 1928).

Decisions to ignore existing problems, such as the ones implicated through the Merriam Report, have undermined the development of a “free” society. American leaders made attempts to develop strategies that improve educational standards for all people (Merriam, 1928). Ensuring everyone’s right to an equal education demands that existing educational practices change. The

study indicated that the Native American people were unable to fully assimilate to the mainstream “economic and social system” of the times that was being forced on them by the government (Lewis, 1928, p.3). By forcing to assimilate to white customs and education, the removal of their culture had completely disenfranchised the Native American society. Unfortunately, time has been wasted in giving the document noteworthy credit.

The proposal for a culturally diverse education came about during the 1960s and 1970s, through the concept of citizenship (Banks, 2004). Prior to that time United States citizenship was obtained through the process of assimilation (Banks, 2004). This practice existed in most parts of the United States (Banks, 2004). The white majority assumed that immigrants would lose their cultural identities to become one mainstream culture (Banks, 2004). However, the assumption was never fully realized. During the ethnic revitalization of the 1960s and 1970s different cultures began to reclaim their identities (Banks, 2004).

Statistics show a massive increase in the numbers of culturally diverse students who are receiving education in the United States (Prater, 2013). This research reveals that public education is growing enormously. Since the demographics of school reflect the overall larger society, there are population changes in the country (Prater, 2013). According to these trends, as reported by the United States Census Bureau, “Hispanics will account for 30% of the U.S. population by 2050” (Prater, 2013, p. 19). These statistics also reveal that, “by 2030 the percentage of school-age children who speak a language other English at home will reach 40%” (Prater, 2013, p. 19). Since there has been a significant growth in America’s population, teachers must be skilled in cultural responsiveness in order to provide effective education for today’s diverse classrooms (Prater, 2013).

During the civil rights movement, people of color challenged the discriminative practices that took place in public institutions (Gorski, 1999). Public schools were specifically targeted because they were not meeting the educational needs of all students (Gorski, 1999). To meet these needs, a culturally responsive education promotes equal educational opportunities for all

students by changing the school environment to reflect the diverse cultures and groups within society (Banks, 2013; Gay, 2010).

The Significance of Culture in Educational Practice

Gay defines culturally responsive teaching “as using the cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspectives of ethnically diverse students as conduits for teaching them more effectively” (Gay, 2002, p. 106). This definition implies that culture equates with the “characteristics, experiences, and perspectives” that make each individual student unique (Gay, 2002, p. 106). Culturally responsive teachers attend to these particular cultural characteristics found in each student (Rychly, 2012). These cultural characteristics incorporate “values, traditions, and languages” and encompass different types of learning styles, relationship norms, and forms of communication (Rychly, 2012, p. 44). This is very related to Spindler’s (1989) notion of culture as a process that takes place “as people make sense of out their own lives and sense of behaviors of other people with whom they have to deal” (p.1). Spindler’s definition focuses on the differences found among groups of people, and within the realm of culturally responsive teaching, teachers use these differences to promote learning.

Culturally responsive teaching fits within constructivist epistemology. Constructivism upholds that knowledge is constructed through an active engagement in learning. Within constructivist paradigms, culture plays an intricate role in shaping and supporting newly acquired information and is an integral part in determining the materials and types of instruction needed for all students (Applefield, 2000; Wilson, 2012). The positive school climate that comes from a culturally responsive education is manifested in multiple ways, including: 1) diminished segregation; 2) lowered tension among the different races; 3) increased retention of ethnic minorities and academic performance; and 4) embracement of a culturally diverse curriculum (Wilson, 2012). Schools that provide a culturally diverse education empower students to take ownership in their own cultural identity while gaining respect and understanding for others (Bartel, 2013).

According to the constructivist paradigm, culture plays a significant role in the manner in which new information is learned (Applefield, 2000). People interpret information according to their own cultural beliefs systems (Applefield, 2000). Often, these interpretations go largely misunderstood by people from different ethnic groups. An education that fosters respect and understanding for cultural diversity clarifies these different perspectives as a means to improve communication. Through the means of promoting a sense of ownership in one's cultural heritage, one gains a healthy self-concept along with increased emotional and social intelligences (Kihlstrom, 2000). In addition, a culturally diverse education plays a significant role in improving student achievement (Banks, 2004).

From a constructivist standpoint, in which knowledge acquisition is influenced largely by cultural beliefs, cultural responsiveness promotes learning (Applefield, 2000). The concept of a culturally diverse education began as part of the ethnic revitalization. Since, a multitude of programs and curricula from a wide assortment of teaching methods supporting cultural diversity have been implemented in schools (Zimmerman, n.d.). The inclusion of cultural diversity in mainstream education recognizes the need to keep cultural attachments, while effectively engaging in a shared culture (Banks, 2004). According to research, schools must transform citizenship education in the 21st century due to the "racial, ethnic, cultural, language, and religious diversity in nation-states throughout the world" (Banks, 2004, p.291). Today, people need the skills and abilities to function in a global society (Banks, 2004). At the same time, people need to be willing and able to contribute to a civic and just community (Banks, 2004).

Teacher Preparation Programs

A study that was conducted through the University of Arizona addresses the need to rethink teacher pedagogy in terms of providing for a culturally enriched curriculum. The study examines the need for new approaches, while it provides guidelines for developing culturally responsive teaching practices within new teacher preparation programs (Kea, 2006). According to the study, numerous schools face the challenge of working cultural diversity into the current

curriculum (Kea, 2006). Many teacher preparation programs fail to see the academic merits of cultural responsiveness. As a result, programs simply add a diversity course to curriculum in order to not seem “anti-diversity” (Kea, 2006). To provide effective teacher training programs one must overcome resistance. According to the study much of the resistance derives from a fear of addressing issues surrounding race and racism (Kea, 2006). If fears persist, student learning from diverse backgrounds will go unmet because of a schools and faculties inability to address the need for providing culturally competent teachers (Kea, 2006).

Research indicates that most pre-service teachers do not have the “knowledge, skills, dispositions, and experiences” required in providing for culturally diverse education (Kea, 2006, p.4). Between the years of 1982 and 2000, there were limited studies addressing cultural diversity (Kea, 2006). An analysis of these studies indicated that researchers limited diversity to race and ethnicity (Kea, 2006). Research also suggests that when teachers receive culturally diverse pre-service training, teachers are less likely to adopt cultural deficit views (Kea, 2006). At the same time, those teachers who have received training in culturally responsive effectiveness are more confident and hold the belief that they can provide effective instruction that fosters respect for diversity (Kea, 2006).

Other empirical research was conducted regarding the attitudes and beliefs of practicing and pre-services art teachers. These studies showed that that the majority of teachers felt inadequate and unprepared when serving students from diverse populations (Lee, 2013). Studies also revealed that a large number of art teachers, who have received multicultural training resist developing culturally, responsive art curriculum (Lee, 2013). Moreover, a larger number of these studies reveal, “that teachers’ attitudes affected their efficacy beliefs about student achievement and impacted how they treated and viewed students of color” (Lee, 2013, p.2). The studies reviewed gave little indication that staff development and teacher pre-services courses improved existing attitudes and beliefs systems regarding culturally and racially diverse student populations (Lee, 2013).

Systematic Process

Providing quality instruction that is both diverse and unifying is challenging for all teachers (Banks, 2004). To be effective, art teachers need greater understanding of culturally diverse curriculum and how to implement it in the classroom. The curriculum theory mirrors the inclusion of cultural diversity in education. Like cultural diversity, there are varied versions associated to the meaning of constructivism. Often, meanings are not fully understood (Applefield, 2000). Teachers must have sound understanding of constructivism in order to evaluate its promise in the classroom (Applefield, 2000). If teachers have a better understanding of constructivism, which is the grounding epistemology of curriculum instruction, they can implement cultural diversity in the classroom more effectively.

Research indicates that culturally responsive teachers must have four defining characteristics in order to successfully meet the learning needs of students.

These four practices are: (1) that teachers are empathetic and caring, (2) that they are reflective about their beliefs about people from other cultures, (3) that they are reflective about their own cultural frames of references, and (4) that they are knowledgeable about other cultures (Rychly, 2012).

Empathetic and caring in the first characteristic is not to be mistaken for “nice” or “kind,” These words stand for those teachers who have no tolerance for underachievement. These teachers hold all students to the same standards. Caring refers to a teacher’s ability to formulate relationships with students. If teachers are caring, they will be more successful when holding students accountable (Rychly, 2012). Teachers must first, however, know the abilities of students and (Rychly, 2012). Teachers must also have the empathy, which enables other needed characteristics (Rychly, 2012).

Other research suggests that teachers follow a six step systematic approach to providing culturally responsive curriculum. This system proposes that teachers implement six steps systematically into existing programs. The first characteristic equips teachers with socio-cultural

consciousness. This first step addresses the cultural influences on a person's behavior and his or her way of thinking (Kea, 2006). To properly address such an issue, teacher candidates and teaching professionals must examine their own negative attitudes toward particular cultural groups (Kea, 2006). The second step indicates that an affirming attitude towards students from culturally diverse backgrounds positively impacts learning, academic performance, and belief in self (Kea, 2006). By adding education related to culture, instructional programs become inclusive (Kea, 2006). The third step establishes the teacher as a change agent. This step addresses a teacher's ability to address and confront barriers associated with change. As a change agent, teachers help schools to become equitable over a period of time (Kea, 2006). In the fourth step, teachers employ the constructivist learning theory and maintain that all students can learn. In addition, teachers provide scaffolding as a means to make connection existing knowledge (Kea, 2006). The fifth step involves a teacher's ability to build relationships with students. In this step, teachers must invest in learning about student experiences and use these experiences as a means to provide effective instruction (Kea, 2006). The sixth step equips teachers with the ability to provide culturally responsive teaching strategies that supports constructivist philosophies of learning. Within the sixth step, teachers assist students through the construction of knowledge by building upon cultural strengths and through the examination of multiple perspectives (Kea, 2006).

According to research, teachers that do not examine their own attitude and belief systems towards other cultures are not able to fully implement the work of cultural responsive teaching (Rychly, 2013). The first factor needed when responding effectively is that "teachers must come to terms with their preconceived notions of the abilities of students from diverse backgrounds" (Rychly, 2013, p. 46). The second factor is teachers must realize the penalties of an innately racist society, which is the "internalization of untruths about different cultural groups" (Rychly, 2013, p. 46). These untruths become apparent in ways that diverse students are discussed. For example teachers should not believe that students lack language skills or intelligence simply

because they do not speak English (Rychly, 2013). Third, teachers should not expect students to assimilate to the majority of cultural norms (Rychly, 2013).

When educators can grasp the importance of cultural responsive teaching, they can consider how to implement it into their classrooms. There are several systematic methods. One such method for implementing cultural diversity is through a five-step process. In the first step of this process, goals are defined. Learning goals must examine what students need to know about the subject taught (Kea, 2006). In providing effective instruction, goals need to provide history of diverse groups. Historical references may come in different forms (Kea, 2006). To execute the concept for the Vietnam War Memorial, artist Maya Lin, took into account the multiple perspectives of those who had fought in Vietnam. According to research, the influences of postmodern thinking, is transforming education in the 21st century (Knight, 2010). Art curriculum that fosters respect for diversity provides pluralistic viewpoints of subject matter. Aside from history, learning goals must also address prejudices, stereotyping, and discrimination practices (Kea, 2006). When designing culturally enriched learning goals, communication patterns and interaction among cultural groups must be considered (Kea, 2006).

The second step for providing for a culturally responsive curriculum is to question traditional concepts (Kea, 2006). By questioning the existing practices, teachers must determine whether or not current curriculum content excludes, distorts, or obscures certain learning groups (Kea, 2006). When questioning, teachers must pull from current research that addresses past distorted and exclusive teaching practices (Kea, 2006). Teachers must also determine how the course will change within the inclusion of new research (Kea, 2006). When developing the course syllabus and overall makeup of the teachers need to consider new researched data (Kea, 2006).

In the third step, teachers must understand student diversity. To understand diversity, teachers must consider the diverse perspectives and experiences coming from each individual student (Kea, 2006). Teachers have to determine how to assess students' previous "knowledge of

race, class, gender, etc” (Kea, 2006, p.6). In addition, teachers must determine how to incorporate diverse voices, instead of allowing students to speak in the place of different groups (Kea, 2006). To provide effective communication, teachers must examine the effects of their personal characteristics and background upon the learning environment (Kea, 2006). Through effective communication, teachers must address the learning needs of all students (Kea, 2006).

In the fourth step for providing for a cultural responsiveness is to carefully select materials and activities. Teachers must decide which research provides a thematic approach to presenting materials that places cultural diversity at the foreground of learning (Kea, 2006). At the same time, new materials must be considered and implemented as an integral part of curriculum, rather than an add-on (Kea, 2006).

The fifth step addresses a teacher’s ability to evaluate curriculum effectiveness (Kea, 2006). Teachers must consider the strengths and weaknesses found in teaching techniques, as related to new material. Appropriate assessments will also be needed to determine the program’s effectiveness (Kea, 2006).

The Role of Art Education

Subjects like the arts have a significant role in securing the necessary life skills and abilities (Baker, 2012). These necessary life skills and abilities, including self-definition, are developed through the arts. At the same time, through the “understanding of one’s own culture, and its norms and traditions” people can grow in appreciation for each other and bear much fruit (Smith, 1983, p.4). The arts provide a means to affirm the knowledge of one’s own cultural heritage, which secures the skills and abilities needed to navigate through life (Smith, 1983).

Constructivism and Art Education

The constructivist philosophy, which is central to art education, indicates the need for culture in educational practices. Knowledge acquisition requires students to pull from their existing intelligence, which is directly linked to culture. Knowledge comes from the internal processes that require students to take an active engagement in learning. In other areas of

education, students receive passively through external sources (Falk, 1994). The constructivist nature of art classes is quite complex. Rather than simply covering the curriculum in a quickened manner, much time must be spent on problem solving and analysis (Falk, 1994).

The constructivist nature of an art curriculum can transcend all disciplines. Deepening the context for understanding, constructivist classrooms provide interdisciplinary approaches that solidify learning (Falk, 1994). Among these approaches, many teachers generalize themes as the method for gaining big solutions. In this way, content matches the developmental skills and abilities of students (Falk, 1994). Common themes, such as the sunlight or movement, stimulate creative responses, and can be referred to as blank canvases available for students to paint their own visual interpretations (Falk, 1994). To provide interpretation, learners naturally pull from their existing experiences and cultural influences as a viable process for constructing knowledge (Applefield, 2000). If a Japanese student draws a picture of the sun, it is red, whereas an American student will draw it yellow. Upon completion, both teachers and students should discuss the cultural differences similarities and differences in visual interpretation (Falk, 1994).

Art educators can provide curriculum that responds to diversity with a greater understanding of epistemology's constructivism. To provide a contemporary curriculum versed in diversity, teachers must address the multiple perspectives from which to view the aesthetics of the world (Chanda, 1992). Since the arts make learning meaningful, art holds a significant place in a culturally diverse education. Research indicates that visual art teachers can meet these challenges in curriculum by comparing cultural aesthetics (Chanda, 1992). However, few teachers actually engage students in diversified art study (Chanda, 1992). Most teachers educate through a homogenous cultural lens of aesthetics, which can inhibit one's ability to understand multiple perspectives (Chanda, 1992). By viewing and interpreting the multiple perspectives found in art, students grow in their understanding of cultural differences and respect for diversity is fostered.

Culturally Responsive Art Education

In contemporary educational practices, art educators can reach more students by designing curriculum that is central to student learning needs. Culture is paramount to understanding the differences found among students. The complexities found in culture can be quite intimidating for teachers; they may have trouble finding a reference point from which to start developing culturally enriched curriculum that fosters positive change. Teachers can begin by identifying student needs (Donahue, 2011). These needs can be largely determined by culture. For example, Hispanic students would benefit greatly from local Chicano artists (Donahue, 2011).

Culturally responsive curriculum theory and pedagogy proposes a systematic method for providing an equitable education for all students (Kea, 2013). Art curriculums that respond to diversity play an intricate role inside the larger context of public schools (Kea, 2006). In the big picture, the arts focus attention to the individual brush strokes that create the details needed to execute the painting. Instead of eliminating art programs, schools can use the arts as a resource to increase cultural awareness and foster respect for diversity.

Understandably, there is much concern about who should be allowed to teach diverse education and who should be able to tell the story (Curtis, 1998). Many teachers feel quite inadequate when dealing with issues of race and culture because each culture has its own view of history and its impact (Curtis, 1998; Lee, 2013). For example, settlers looking to become land owners during the Oklahoma land run would perceive that historical event as an opportunity for a new life. Native Americans, however, view the event as an insurmountable loss and cultural demise. These different viewpoints propose challenges for teachers in today's diverse classrooms. Teachers must create a fine balance and open forum that allows for the expression of multiple viewpoints (Banks, 2004).

The study conducted by visual art director and teacher, Mun Yee Lee, provides pedagogical support and insight for secondary art teachers. Lee explains the experience of “de-

sensing.” According to Lee, “de-sensing,” moves the focus from the action to the manner that someone takes to open his or her mind (Lee, 2013). In this case, art teachers must respond to the needs of a culturally diverse classroom (Kea, 2006). Upon considering the overall goals of the learning activity, art teachers should engage in questioning to determine whether or not the content meets curriculum needs for diverse learners (Kea, 2006). Lee claims that art teachers have trouble “de-sensing” because they think in terms of being practical, which can be a moral concern (Lee, 2013.). An art teacher is mainly concerned with producing student art and achievement (Lee, 2013).

For most teachers, educating in diverse student populations is quite complicated when students come from unfamiliar backgrounds (Dray, 2011). Before administering cultural responsiveness, art teachers must consider the challenges associated with acceptance (Dray, 2011). They must engage in “de-sensing” in order to open the mind. A teacher needs to identify and reflect on his or her own cultural beliefs and understand how these systems impact their view of students (Dray, 2011). Because of cultural miscommunication, educators, often, categorize diverse students inappropriately. Problems arise when teachers try to make meanings out of student behavior (Dray, 2011).

Art teachers may become frustrated at times in the pursuit of providing a culturally responsive curriculum. Lee provides an example of an art teacher who engaged students in the activity of drawing a shoe. She exclaims that the teacher lamented over her students’ constant failure to draw naturalistically despite her efforts to provide quality instruction (Lee, 2013). According to Lee, the art teacher failed to see the complex nature of the shoe drawing activity. The art teacher had mistakenly mixed skill development with learning. The purpose of the task focused on the subject matter, rather than considering if the lesson’s contribution met the overall learning intentions (Lee, 2013). In addition, art teachers must consider how learning activities fit into the overall holistic purposes of art education (Lee, 2013.).

At times, art teachers tend to choose subject matter based solely out of convenience. Shoe drawing was one such decision, since all students have shoes (Lee, 2013). Providing curriculum that engages diverse students is quite more challenging (Lee, 2013). Art teachers without training in diverse curriculum development may feel uncertain and insecure about subject matter. According to an/the Arizona study, some educators in teacher preparation programs do not have experience with providing culturally diverse curriculum (Kea, 2006). Naturally, the failure or inability to address such issues, such as cultural diversity, is imparted to new teachers. In turn, new teachers become career teachers that are ill prepared in providing effective in developing curriculum culturally diverse visual arts education.

In culturally responsive education, the curriculum needs of students in visual arts programs must be student centered (Knight, 2010). An effective arts curriculum engages students with both contemporary and traditional practices. When presented solely with European works, students may feel far removed and may consider the material nonsense (Knight, 2010). At this point, students lose interest and fail to take active involvement in the learning activity (Knight, 2010). Teachers, who fail to have students explore new contemporary ideas, may not feel comfortable with curriculum content (Knight, 2010). Many teachers, who have received a solid education through the modern system, may question the importance of addressing curriculum choices (Knight, 2010). Current practices in curriculum renew vision in the 21st century (Knight, 2010). This new vision provides students with “opportunities to respond and question histories via personalized outputs that closely associate with the images in contemporary society” (Knight, 2010, p. 237). The new vision requires that “students actively initiate and participate in a cycle of gaze and production or gaze and action/reaction rather than being passive receptors of dissemination” (Knight, 2010, p. 237). The goal is to provide all students with diverse curriculum that fosters respect for diversity. By providing students with greater opportunities to become involved in their education, hierarchies of power diminish, and students

are no longer the spectators. Students are now engaged in determining meanings and are actively involved in the learning process (Knight, 2010).

In culturally responsive teaching, curriculum must be effective for making learning meaningful to all students. According to research, there are two fundamental criteria for designing an effective arts curriculum: (1) preparing curriculum and instruction that promotes meaningful and insightful learning through art, and (2) to provide students with the knowledge needed to formulate meanings and for self-expression (Jacobs, 2010). A culturally enriched arts curriculum provides meaningful content that enables students to grow in their understanding for the world and each other.

Using Scaffolding

Since culturally responsive teaching uses scaffolding to increase student learning, curriculum should be designed in a way that builds upon previous knowledge. When visual arts teachers use culture as a means to construct knowledge, learning becomes relevant to all learners (Donahue, 2011). Finding a way to make learning meaningful for all students can be challenging for teachers (Donahue, 2011). A starting place for teachers may come through the observations and interactions of the community art (Donahue, 2011). Some communities may have public art, such as murals. However, all communities have art (Donahue, 2011). Public art, like murals, can hold a “wealth of history, stories, and symbols in a community” (Donahue, 2011, p. 70). Instead of receiving knowledge, teachers inquiring about public art engage in the construction of meaning. By investigating public art, teachers show respect to learners and can provide a more individualized instruction equitable to all learners (Donahue, 2011).

When teachers engage students in an exploration of public art, both students and teachers become “active participants, not active bystanders, in knowledge building” (Donahue, 2011, p. 71). Research indicates that people naturally have an acquired knowledge and competency that comes through life. These experiences lead teachers to a multitude of pedagogical practices that produce positive results among learners (Donahue, 2011). Because of the constructivist nature of

a cultural curriculum, teachers are utilize their own experiences as means to develop curriculum that is responsive to student learning needs.

The needed cognitive process linked to making meaning in art provides a method to gain knowledgeable insight about the community (Donahue, 2011). Instead of making fast decisions that are superficial in nature, teachers can transform the curriculum by responding to diversity through deepened content by studying the art found in a student's world (Donahue, 2011). Teachers may investigate local museums and galleries, and the popular visual culture that is available to students within the community (Donahue, 2011). Teachers that emphasize visual culture in their classrooms inspire students to investigate "issues of social justice and democracy" (Donahue, 2011, p. 71).

Education should be designed in a way that develops the knowledge of cultural diversity, while unifying people (Donelson, 1969). When teachers respond to the diversity needs of students, they foster respect for diversity and make learning meaningful. Through these experiences, students grow in their ability to appreciate the individual characteristics found in people, while simultaneously recognizing their own similarities (Donelson, 1969). Another way to gather information regarding students is through the emerging technique of personal narratives or self-portraits (Curtis, 1998). Students can combine visual art with writing. Personal narratives are tools for fostering the self-reflection of one's own cultural identity, while examining the identities found in others (Curtis, 1998). In order to make the experience successful, teachers model behavior and engage in the process. When both teachers and students engage in the process of constructing the self-portrait and written narrative, it is an effectual means to "unlearn racism" (Curtis, 1998). When teachers and students engage in making self-portraits and written narratives, the process of unlearning racism takes place (Curtis, 1998).

Culturally responsive teaching in visual arts classes stimulates students to take an active role in learning through emotional and intellectual development (Mynarikova, 2012). A study was conducted in the Czech Republic to determine how art based instruction and art therapy

improves students' active engagement in learning. The program ran for eight weeks and had 25 student participants. Instructors met with students for forty-five minute sessions (Mynarikova, 2012). The chosen techniques were ones that had previously received positive student responses. Using artistic expression, students were given several tasks to complete. One such activity engaged students in drawing a personal history (Mynarikova, 2012). The program engaged students in the constructivist way of thought. In order to be part of the process, students had to pull from existing knowledge, which had been largely influenced by students' cultural background. The study revealed improved communication skills that ultimately resulted in a better class climate. In addition, students responded with increased "cooperation, manifestation, and recognition of emotions and identity enforcement" (Mynarikova, 2012, p.720).

When students gain new knowledge for diverse curriculums, they benefit from new ways of thinking. With a deepened content approach to curriculum and knowing can potentially be "unframed" (Donahue, 2011). The multitude of ideas that can be constructed in a diverse community of learners provides opportunities for students to reach beyond their personal frames and references to grasp different points of view (Falk, 1994). The act of "unframing" refers to a person's ability to consider the different perspective associated (Donahue, 2011). When students are presented with multiple perspectives, they must arrive at their own belief systems. These choices encourage autonomy development.

Assessing Art

Culturally responsive teaching practices require multiple assessment methods (Davis-Soylu, 2011). Portfolios are part of contemporary educational practice. Providing assessment results for community stakeholders and the larger government context has always been challenging for arts classes (Davis-Soylu, 2011). For one, creativity cannot be measured through simple multiple choice testing. Creative problems propose different solutions for each student. The information gained from portfolio assessments cannot easily be understood or accessed outside a classroom environment (Davis-Soylu, 2011). Teachers must provide assessment results

to shared stakeholders. Many art educators believe that assessment is a crucial factor to preservation of art education in schools. Commonly, teachers can provide these results through formalized exhibitions and contests that showcase student achievement (Davis-Soylu, 2011).

Art and the Global Economy

Culturally responsive teaching provides a curriculum that better prepares students for 21st century global markets. Since the global community provides many career opportunities for students, art classes need to integrate technology (Jacobs, 2010). When students access art through the Internet, they embark on virtual artistic encounters (Jacobs, 2010). In addition, art mediums now include different kinds of multimedia forms. By blending a culturally enriched curriculum to include content integrated with technology, students have greater opportunities for creativity and self-expression.

Summary

The literature review provides a platform to begin the study and directs the path of new discovery. Much research has been completed revealing how to implement culturally responsive curriculum and the need for cultural responsive education. This literature review specifically, focuses attention to visual art classes, as being an intricate piece of culturally responsive practice. The literature review provides examples of student centered learning that is meaningful. These examples will provide the researcher with the insight that will guide the study. The literature review provides deepened learning for further research regarding a culturally enriched arts curriculum that fosters respect and understanding for diversity. There are several differing methods for enriched curriculum design. Each one, however, promotes the social interaction that can be gleaned from a culturally diverse curriculum. In a culturally enriched art curriculum, students learn about themselves as well as each other.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This qualitative study can bring understanding to the constructed meanings found in culturally responsive teaching as applied to visual arts classes. A qualitative approach brings understanding for the deeper meanings found in culturally responsive teaching because this approach allows the researcher the experience of real life situations (Creswell, 2009; Gay, 2006). Qualitative inquiry requires the researcher to be the instrument for data collection, methodological design, and data analysis (Warren, 2008).

Purpose of the Study

This study examines culturally responsive teaching in art education in selected high school visual art classes.

Research Questions

The research questions guiding this study were:

1. How do teachers carry out culturally responsive teaching?
2. How is culturally responsive teaching in the art classroom supported by the administration?
3. What other findings are pertinent to culturally responsive teaching?

Research Design

Constructivism is the epistemological perspective of this study. Constructivist theorist Bruner holds that learners use existing knowledge as the basis for constructing new ideas and

concepts (Applefield, 2000; Bruner, 2004). This perspective of knowledge of acquisition suggests that one's interpretation is largely determined by culture (Applefield, 2000; Bruner, 2008). Culturally diverse environments provide many ways of interpreting and communicating information (Gay, 2010). For the purpose of this study, the interactions that occurred between teachers and students, teachers and administrators, and teachers and the communities revealed the manifestation of culturally responsive teaching.

Case study methodology was used to “explore in depth a program, event, activity, process, or one or more individuals” (Creswell, 2010, p. 13). Case narratives portrayed how teachers use the culturally responsive characteristics of caring, communication, curriculum, and instruction as a conduit for instructing in visual arts classes.

Methodological Procedures

Participant Selection

For this study, I selected two large, culturally diverse, urban high schools in the same district. These schools were chosen for this study because of the diverse student bodies represented. These students fit the profiles of those students who have long been marginalized in the public schools, as described by Gay (Gay, 2010). The diversity in these schools included “low income, and ethnic minority groups (Gay, 2010, p. ix). According to Gay, culturally responsive teaching is an effective way to progress student academic achievement in “diverse racial, ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and social-class groups” (Gay, 2010, p.x). Both schools had established art programs led by experienced art teachers. Visual arts classes served as two overarching case studies for specific individual case studies. Multiple case studies were used. This method gave the researcher the ability to analyze data within a single setting and across the settings (Baxter, 2008). Through this system of analysis, I was able to analyze each teacher's classroom setting and the art departments where they teach. Both the overarching district and individual school narrative illustrate culturally responsive teaching and the manifestation of cultural diversity in this study. Many different interactions took place within the classrooms,

such as teacher to student and student to teacher. In addition, there was interaction between the students and the art works that they created. The ideal location for the case study research was the visual art classroom because of these multiple interactions and the student diversity that exists in there.

To shed light on the chosen topic defined by the problem statement, I used purposeful sampling to select participants (Creswell, 2009). Purposeful sampling gives the researcher the ability to strategically choose whom, where, and how the research should take place (Palys, n.d.). In the study, I examined the current teaching practices of visual arts teachers. These visual art teachers were chosen because of their experience and expertise. For this study, I used six teachers and three administrators within the same district. The first school provided four teachers, whereas the second school provided two. These two large schools were located in urban areas and had a diverse student bodies. I interviewed a vice principal at one of the schools that supports the arts as well as the English language learners director for the district. In addition, I interviewed the fine arts administrator for the school district. The data gathered for the research came from on-site interviews and observations.

Data Collection

Observations. I gathered data from observational visits at school sites and conducted observations in classroom settings, school art shows, and other events related to the visual arts. In addition, I took descriptive and reflective notes. Notes described the physical environment, the reconstruction of dialogues, and the explanation of the accounts of certain events (Creswell, 2010). Throughout my observations, I also wrote reflections of my experiences. The observations were extremely important for me to be able to visualize how teachers provide culturally responsive teaching. I found that the observations to be as important as the interviews because the observations allowed me the chance to see how teachers actually use culturally responsive teaching in their classrooms.

Interviews. I interviewed participants, a common strategy used in qualitative research. For this study, the technique known as unstructured interviews was used. This approach to collecting data provides for broad open-ended questioning that elicits detailed in-depth responses (Cohen, 2006). Rather than restricting data, open-ended questioning is needed to expand the latitude of exploration (Bryant, 2004). Through the use of open-ended questioning, unstructured interviews help deepen understanding of the issues related to culture, settings, and real life situations (Cohen, 2006).

For the interviews, a series of open-ended questions regarding culturally responsive teaching was asked. Administrators and teachers contributed to the dialogue. I conducted face to face interviews at a designated area. All interviews were recorded and transcribed for the collection of data.

Documents and Artifacts. I gathered and analyzed documents that supplied pertinent information about the program. These documents revealed a culturally responsive teaching that is specific to visual arts classes. These may include: class syllabus, photographs of the classroom, student assignments, and school demographical information. I communicated with teachers in person, by phone, and through electronic communication. Teachers were supplied with documentation through use of e-mail and through hand delivery.

Audio-Visual Materials. Photographs were part of the documentation of collected data. I photographed visual art classrooms, places inside the school where art is present, and special art events. In addition, websites that supplied information regarding visual arts classes were photographed. These photographs provided insight to the important aspects of visual arts classes that pertain to culturally responsive teaching.

Data Analysis

After unitizing data on note cards, I divided the cards and grouped them into various categories. In order to complete this task, I used triangulation; in triangulation all data from differing sources are cross-referenced to further validate relevant findings (Patton, 2002). The

practice of triangulation strengthens a study through the cross referencing of data sources (Patton, 2002). With triangulation, I identified the different topics within the note card groupings. Each group signified a topic. Then, I analyzed and examined these topics as means to further assess the strengths and weaknesses found in the beliefs surrounding existing multicultural fine arts curriculum.

Organize, prepare, and read data. For the organization of the data, I transcribed the interviews, typed the observations, and digitized the documents. Data were organized according to school and the date collected. I typed and filed reflections of art events, interviews, and observations accordingly.

Code data. When all the information was organized and reviewed, I coded the data through a predetermined approach for coding data as described by Creswell (2009). For the establishment of validity, I used the method of data triangulation. This approach gave me the ability to categorize collected data into specific sub-groups that were relevant to culturally responsive teaching. With this method, I combined different sources of data to ensure in “truth and certainty” in the composed information presented (Guion, 2013, p.1). This approach revealed consistencies that were relevant to culturally responsive teaching (Guion, 2013).

Categories. I organized data according to the four characteristics of culturally responsive teaching. The four characteristics that make-up culturally responsive teaching were the predetermined categories for this study (Creswell, 2009). Data were written on note cards, divided, and placed in the correct categories.

Convey findings and interpret meanings. Findings were conveyed in a narrative format and placed chronological order according to the date and time the data source was obtained. Visual illustrations and charts were used to further convey meanings.

Researcher Role

As the researcher, my role was to communicate with all parties involved. To communicate clearly, I conducted an informative meeting with both teachers and administrators

regarding the study's proposal and purpose. Because the study was about culturally responsive teaching, I engaged and cultivated relationships with the teachers and administrators in order to gain trust and credibility. By working together, we developed and established a timeline of events that clearly allowed all parties time to prepare for study. During the meeting times, all parties determined the best modes of communication to take for the study. When I conducted research, I wanted to ensure that all information received was accurate. I provided all documents for both teachers and administrators to review. These included: interview transcriptions, artifacts, and narrative observations. A description of the school environment was provided. Names were excluded from the research.

Researcher Bias

My first teaching position was in Ibaraki, Japan, where I taught English as a foreign language in a Japanese junior high school. Full immersion in the Japanese culture helped me develop a deep understanding and respect for diversity. Because of my cultural and language differences, mannerisms, and actions, the Japanese misunderstood me. Unintentionally, I would say or do something that was culturally or socially unacceptable and was interpreted as rude or inappropriate. While the cultural nuances were very different from what I had been accustomed to, I eventually discovered that fundamentally, as humans, we are also very similar. Yet, the manners in which we communicate are quite different. During my two years in Japan, I began developing an appreciation for the importance of cultural identity in developing one's persona. I realized that the retention of one's cultural identity is of absolute importance. Simultaneously, I saw the relevance of this reality in the classroom.

I assume that culturally responsive teaching may or may not be fully understood among teachers. Materials for implementing a culturally responsive curriculum may be limited. Teachers may or may not fully grasp how to provide effective instruction for a culturally enriched art curriculum. Some teachers may not have administrative support to implement a culturally responsive curriculum, whereas, other teachers will. There is also the assumption that teachers

who implement culturally responsive pedagogy into their curriculum will have more engaged students.

I am not a minority. The information gained in this study comes from what others have presented. To better understand the phenomenon of culturally responsive teaching, I conducted interviews, observations, and collected lesson plans, syllabi, and school websites from teachers and administrators. I assume that some may tend to discredit this study. Nevertheless, for positive changes to occur, I believe that each person must do his/her part. I hope this work will encourage future exploration of this topic. When we respond to cultural diversity, we can more readily address the varied needs of all students.

Ethical Considerations

To ensure that proper protocol was followed for addressing the multiple ethical issues in qualitative research, I am providing a checklist. This checklist came from researched data and was pertinent to this particular study. These included: (1) a full explanation of the purpose and process to identified participants, while explaining the mutual benefits of the study, (2) issue informed consent and provide assurance of confidentiality to participants, (3) obtain Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval from Oklahoma State University, (4) acquire access to the research sites, (5) informed consent and the assurance of confidentiality to participants, (5) establish boundaries for interviews, observations, and the collection of documents (Patton, 2002). Further descriptions of these ethical considerations are provided in the following paragraph.

I assigned pseudonyms to all participants and participating schools to provide the protective anonymity for this study. All data received, recorded, and documented were secured in a locked cabinet at my home. Photographs were discussed with participants to ensure correct interpretation of imagery.

Trustworthiness of Findings

The four criteria for establishing trustworthiness in a study are provided by Lincoln and Guba (1985) (Refer to Appendix A for Trustworthiness Table).

These include: conformability, credibility, dependability, and transferability (Cohen, 2006; Lincoln, 1985). Conformability is the degree to which findings are shaped by the participants, rather than researcher bias (Cohen, 2006). Credibility supports the truth in the findings (Cohen, 2006). Dependability in research shows that the findings can be repeated (Cohen, 2006). Transferability shows that the findings can be seen in other contexts (Cohen, 2006).

Credibility

To ensure credibility, I used several different approaches to conducting research. One way is to spend much time observing the classrooms, listening to the teachers, and reviewing documents. Through the dedication of time and consistency, I developed relationships with administrators and teachers that aided in the research process. Another way was to engage in peer debriefing with other professionals. Throughout my cohort program, I have been able to analyze and explore the areas of inquiry for this study (Cohen, 2006). In addition, to these, member checking was completed. During interviews, I summarized and restated information to determine accuracy with participants (Howard, 2012). Toward the end of the research project, participants were given the analyzed data and reports to review authenticity of work (Howard, 2012). In this process, I ensured effective communication with all parties involved via cell phone and email. Lastly, triangulation was incorporated in this study. Data gathered from documents, interviews, and observations were divided into categories (Patton, 2002).

Transferability

I provided a “thick description” for the reader. As described by Lincoln and Guba, a “thick description” is a method for achieving validity from external sources (Cohen, 2006; Lincoln, 1985). When researchers provide detailed descriptions of the phenomenon, readers come to their own conclusions regarding the areas in the study that can be transferred to other people, places, and circumstances (Cohen, 2006; Lincoln, 1985).

Conformability & Dependability

Transparency in research was high priority in this study. All interview transcriptions, observations, and documents are available upon request.

Summary

In chapter three, I provided the approaches that were used to gather and analyze necessary data for revealing culturally responsive teaching in selected art education contexts. In the chapter, I stated my role as the researcher, the methodologies that were used, and my bias as the researcher. Chapter four presents the data, chapter five the analysis and chapter six reports the findings.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION OF DATA

In this chapter, the data collected throughout this study are reviewed and presented. The purpose of this study is to examine culturally responsive teaching in two different high school visual art programs at two different selected schools. Both schools were located in the same district and were chosen for this study because of their large diverse student bodies. Before narrowing the focus of this study to these two high school visual art programs, reviewing education at the state and district level is necessary. This broader review will create a more complete understanding in the minds of the reader for the current condition of visual arts education in the state of Oklahoma.

Visual Art Education at the State Level

The Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE) supports art education. OSDE guides the development of art education in Oklahoma by providing teachers with an easy to follow curriculum framework across the grade levels. In this framework, there are four standards: presenting, responding, creating, and connecting (Arts, 2015). Each standard represents an increased level of understanding and skill in students. For the purpose of this study, the high school visual arts curriculum will be examined. Under each standard, there are goals and objectives that students need to know in order to academically progress in visual arts. These goals and objectives provide students with the ability to verbally and visually communicate the interaction of the elements of art and the principles of design in works of art. These standards are shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Oklahoma State Standards for Visual Arts

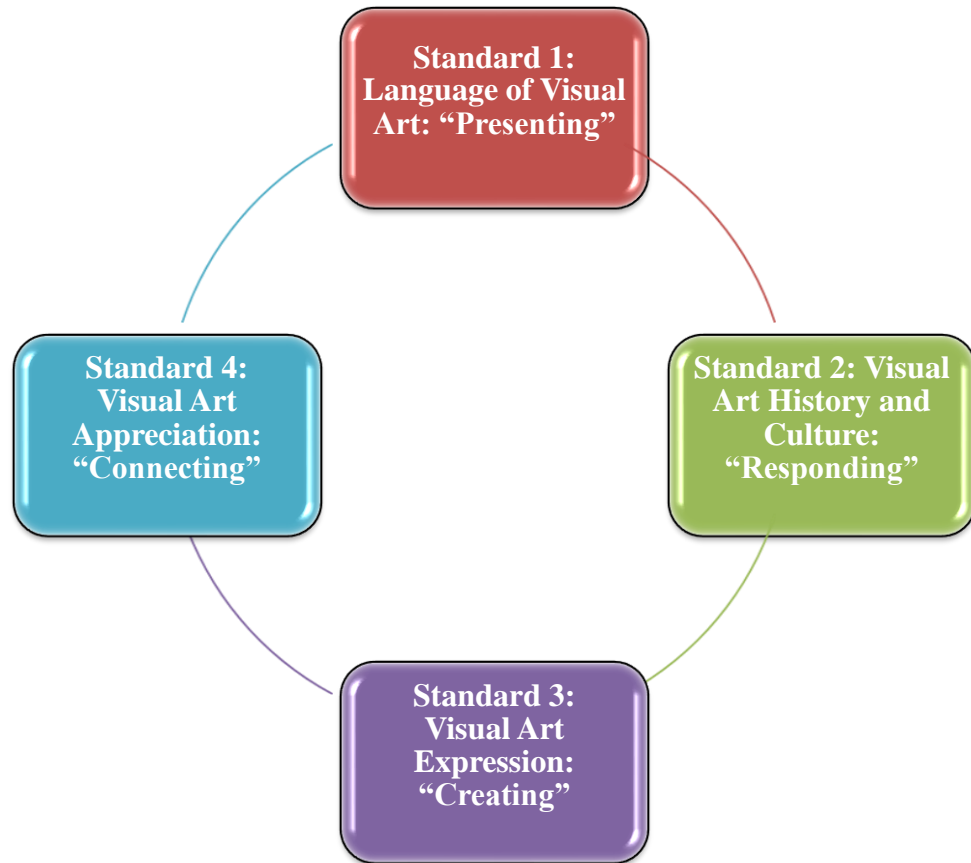


Figure 2. Visual representation of Oklahoma state standards for visual arts (Arts, 2015).

“Standard 1: Language of Visual Art: ‘Presenting’

The student will identify and communicate using a variety of visual art terms” (Arts, 2015).

This standard ensures that students receive the foundational skills needed for further study in the visual arts. Under this standard, students gain the vocabulary skills needed to identify and apply the elements and principles of design in works of art. Students are able to describe how the elements of art and principles of design interact in existing work of art.

“Standard 2: Visual Art History and Culture: ‘Responding’

The student will recognize the development of visual art from a historical and cultural perspective” (Arts, 2015).

In the second standard, teachers provide opportunities for students to respond to culture. Students understand the development of art through history and how it reflects culture. This standard presents information in two forms, proficient and advanced. When students are proficient, they are merely able to recognize and describe the basic underlying themes of the major art movements. As students advance in knowledge, there is a shift in curriculum. At this point with advanced responding, teachers use historical perspectives as basis for further analysis of contemporary issues relating to the visual arts. When teachers design curriculum to meet the needs of diverse students, they are able to make art relative to the lives of students they teach. This standard supports culturally responsive teaching because provides a historical backdrop for the contemporary issues facing students today.

“Standard 3: Visual Art Expression: ‘Creating’

The student will observe, select, and utilize a variety of ideas and subject matter in creating original works of art” (Arts, 2015).

In this standard, students create works of art in two and three dimensions. These works encompass many different mediums and techniques. This standard includes traditional techniques of sculpture, painting, printmaking, and drawing as well as digital media. Students create a portfolio of original works in this standard. Students also engage in analyzing works developed through the use of technology.

“Standard 4: Visual Art Appreciation: ‘Connecting’

The student will appreciate and utilize visual art to make interdisciplinary connections (Arts, 2015).”

In this standard, students create a portfolio that is illustrative of student voice. In developing the portfolio, student access knowledge gained from the different disciplines.

Alongside the development of the portfolio, students write an artist statement that defines their work. In this standard, students also engage in critiques and attend gallery or museums exhibits.

Advanced Placement Studio Art

The state of Oklahoma supports the Advanced Placement (AP) studio arts program as a way to promote student achievement in the visual arts. The state standards are aligned to AP Studio Arts curriculum. Advanced Placement is a rigorous program that equips students for further collegiate art study. The program offers students a selection of three different courses. The courses consist of drawing, II dimensional design, and III dimensional design (Studio, 2014). Students taking these courses complete a portfolio that is submitted for evaluation during the spring semester. Students who have qualifying portfolios may earn college credit.

There are twenty-four works that complete the AP Studio Art portfolio. These works are divided into three sections. These sections include: breadth, area of concentration, and quality (Studio, 2014). Within each of these sections, there are specific requirements. For the breadth section, students submit twelve original works that demonstrate a student's versatility of mediums, techniques, styles, and compositions (Studio, 2014). The area of concentration requires an additional twelve original works. In this section, students create a theme and show development of that theme. The last portion of the portfolio is the quality section (Studio, 2014). For this section, five works are selected from the twenty-four. These works reflect a student's expertise and are mailed to directly to the testing center.

For successful completion of the AP Studio Art portfolio, students must show evidence of artistic voice (Studio, 2014). For this to happen, teachers must provide opportunities for students to develop their visual communication skills. As part of this development, teachers engage students in researching different topics that are relative to created works (Studio, 2014). When students conduct research, they gain ideas that can be further explored and practiced. The teacher, in this case, directs student learning by providing students with creative problems to

solve. As students progress through these courses, teachers continuously engage students in critical analysis through various assessment strategies.

Grant Funding

Oklahoma provides grant funding for the development of AP Studio Art programs. There is a first time grant, which helps teachers begin an AP program and second time grants, which enable an existing program to make improvements. In addition, teachers can apply vertical team grants. The vertical team grant provides AP training to teachers at the feeder middle school and at the high school. Vertical team training helps teachers develop curriculum that builds upon prior knowledge. The program begins preparing students in middle school to eventually take the advanced placement class in high school.

State Organizations

The Oklahoma Art Education Association (OAEA) is the state organization of visual art teachers. This organization provides support to art teachers through professional development and camaraderie. OAEA also showcases student talent across the state of Oklahoma through annual art exhibitions. The organization awards outstanding student portfolios scholarships to graduating seniors seeking further study in the field of art.

Education at the District Level

Eagle Crest Public schools

History and Student Population

The district was formed in 1915, when a group of community families joined together to determine the best way to educate their children. Since that time, Eagle Crest has had a 100 year rich history for preparing students to be productive and successful citizens. The district is located in suburbia on the western side of an urban area and serves approximately 19,447 students. There are a total of thirty-one campuses, nineteen elementary schools, five middle schools, three high schools, an alternative high school, and an alternative middle school. The district reaches a total of 43 square miles and has an average of 446.3 students per square mile. The district has

increased in diversity over the last several years. The district demographics reveal the student population of 43% White, 25% Black, 4% Asian, 24% Hispanic, and 3% Native American. The number of students in the district receiving free/reduced lunch is above the state average of 62% and rests at 76.4%. The rate of poverty among the student population is 17%, which is 1% above the state average. In addition, the average family income is \$62, 910. Figure 3 shows a visual breakdown of the different demographics in the school. Figure 4 reveals those students receiving free and reduced lunches.

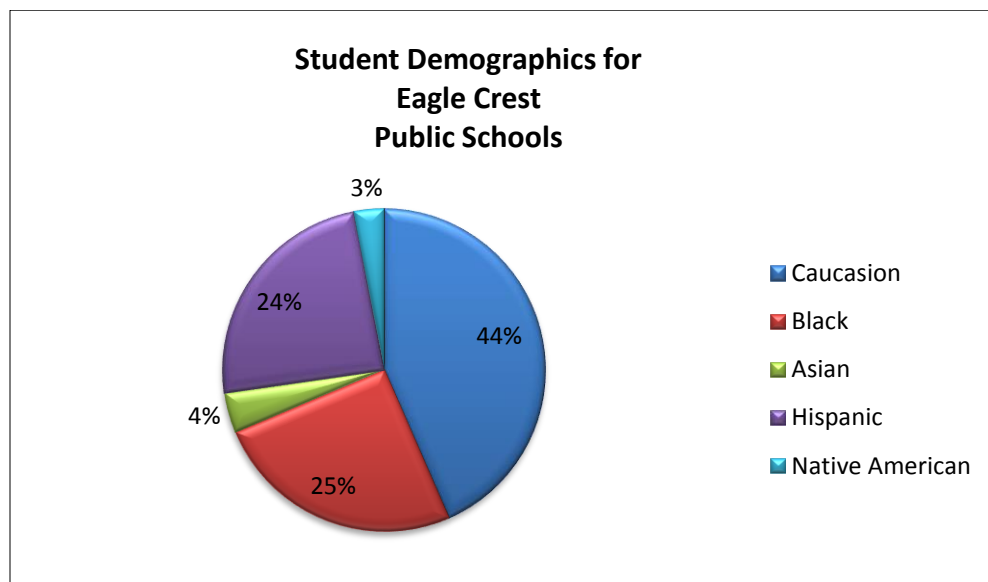


Figure 3. Student Demographics of Eagle Crest Public Schools

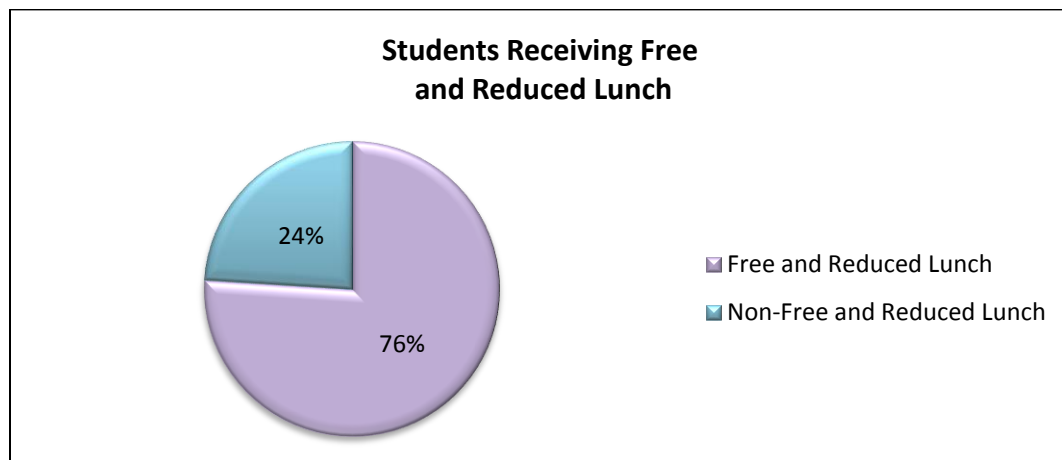


Figure 4. Students Receiving Free and Reduced Lunch at Eagle Crest Public Schools

The school district is considered academically rigorous and a leader in state education with a 97.1% graduation rate. During the last 28 years, 220 students have been national merit scholars, giving Eagle Crest Public Schools one of the highest totals in state history. In 2015, there were two district national merit finalists. Graduates have achieved wide success in all subject areas. Those students completing a college bound curriculum sits at 92.7% and the average ACT score is 20.5.

The district continues to receive national, state, and local recognition. Part of the district's success, is its strong parental support. There are approximately 4000 PTA members across the district. The district has a long history of supporting bond elections, which has allowed Eagle Crest Schools to have state of the art facilities available to teachers and students. Students involved in the fine arts classes are 20.5%, which is well above the state average of 7.1%.

Mission and Vision

The mission of the Eagle Crest Public School System is “to prepare our students to be responsible citizens and lifelong learners.” The Eagle Crest Public School system continues to grow with the changing society. One of the ways in which it continues to grow is to stay abreast of technological advances. A district goal in this area is to develop and implement a student intranet, which can make online curriculum accessible to students. Currently, the district has a three-year technology plan for implementation of new software and programs. The district continues to enrich student learning through a technology and information driven society.

District Initiatives

Professional Learning Communities. In order to improve student academic performance at each school, Eagle Crest Public Schools has chosen to engage in Professional Learning Communities (PLC). In order to operate these communities, the school system has chosen to enact Late Start Wednesdays. Late Start Wednesdays permits students to arrive at school an hour later on Wednesdays, while the teachers throughout the district attend their professional learning community. During this time, teachers review data and best teaching

practices to better meet the needs of their diverse student populations. In these meetings, teachers set smart goals and formulate strategies that will help them reach these goals.

Fine Arts. Smart Goals have been set for both schools. These include: improving student test scores, increasing the number of students enrolled in visual arts classes, and increasing the number of students taking the Advanced Placement examination. In addition, the professional learning communities are designing strategies to ensure that these goals are met. Each meeting has a weekly agenda and written progress report. Meetings are led by the department chairs.

District Fine Art Programs

Arts Fair. During April of each year, Eagle Crest Public Schools hosts a school wide arts fair. The Eagle Crest Art's Fair serves as a way to cultivate relationships with parents and with the surrounding school communities through the showcasing of the visual and performing arts. The department of visual and performing arts in Eagle Crest Public Schools is very well established offering students a diversified curriculum in the areas of band, orchestra, vocal music, dance, drama, and visual art. At the event, visual art students from the district's 27 schools exhibit their works that have been created during the school the year. Non-stop performances from the band, orchestra, vocal music, dance provide entertainment for festival attendees. As part of the event, there is a silent auction fund-raiser. Money raised from the event serve the fine arts department at Eagle Crest Public Schools.

Art Events. Besides the festivals, each school interacts with its surrounding community and state organizations to better serve students of the visual arts. Teachers showcase student talent at state and local shows. Work from Eagle Crest students can be seen at the state fair of Oklahoma. In addition, each of the public high schools submits works in Young Talent, which is a scholarship competition offered by the Oklahoma Art Education Association. The professional organization also works with the Oklahoma Museum of Modern Art to host portfolio day. On this day, college professors representing university art programs from across the nation review student portfolios and recruit students to their universities.

Visual Arts Funding

Visual arts funding for Eagle Crest Public Schools has been \$12.00 per student for the last several years. In the 2015 school year, however, budget cuts eliminated half of the fine arts funding. In order to make up the difference in costs, art teachers at each of the schools conducted fundraisers. This money allowed for the purchase of art supplies for each student. Teachers do not charge students any fees for taking arts classes. Additional funding comes from bond elections. Ten years ago the district was able to purchase new kilns and pottery wheels from the annual bond election. A bond election recently passed for the purchase of new band uniforms and equipment. The purchase of visual arts equipment is planned in the near future.

Participant Profiles

John Smith. John is the fine arts chairman for the Eagle Crest Public School District. Before assuming the role, John taught visual art at one of the district's high schools for five years. John has a Master's in Art education and is currently pursuing his Ph.D. in curriculum in educational studies. Due to his education and experience, John is able to provide effective leadership and direction for this large school district. To John, the ideal relationship between teacher and students is one that is comfortable. According to John, a comfortable relationship between teacher and student allows the students be open to exploring and trying new things. John also stated that there are multiple ways to build trust and confidence in students.

When Mr. Smith took the position, he followed a retiring individual who had occupied the position for twenty years. The success of the former individual made that person a hard act to follow. However, Mr. Smith had been a visual arts teacher at Wings High School in the district for five years. In addition, he had a Masters in Arts Education. Mr. Smith's qualifications and experience in the classroom enabled the teachers to trust him. In addition to providing support for the fine arts administrator for the district, Mr. Smith became the director of the gifted and talented program.

When asked about culturally responsive teaching, Mr. Smith responded, “Culturally responsive teaching means designing pedagogy that directly relates to a group of people’s culture.” Mr. Smith indicated that culturally responsive teaching ties in the artifacts, norms, and art of a group of people. He also claims that teachers can effectively teach students once they learn about the cultures that exist in the classroom. To do this, he encourages teachers to become part of the community.

Since John has been administrator, he has seen the importance of advocacy for the arts in education. According to John, sometimes parents and teachers do not see the value in fine arts education. He claims that there is a societal stigma where the arts are viewed as strictly recreational. John also responded that the arts expand minds and make divergent thinkers, which is necessary for societal growth.

Dr. Pertuisot. Dr. Pertuisot has experience in working with students from diverse cultures. He is the district administrator for the English Language Learners (ELL). His background is both French and African. Before becoming an administrator, Dr. Pertuisot taught French in the public schools. Dr. Pertuisot serves as a resource for art teachers in the district because many students taking art are English language learners. When asked about culturally responsive teaching, Dr. Pertuisot stated, “Culturally responsive teaching means that students of all backgrounds have the opportunity to use their cultures to contribute to the lessons.” He further expressed, “their contribution is “without the feeling of being undermined or belittled.” He added that culturally responsive teaching is an innovative approach to teaching where cultures are constantly being introduced into the lessons. He also claims that this innovative approach is based on a continuum of development, where cultures are being constantly introduced throughout the year.

Jack Sanders. Jack has a unique way of connecting with students. In his own way, he empowers students to excel beyond their own expectations. Students enjoy taking his class because he makes them feel special. After teaching art for five years, Jack decided to move into

administration. At this time, he serves as an assistant administrator for schools in the district. As a new administrator and former teacher, Jack values the experiences and wisdom of those teachers who have taught for many years. Jack has found that many students who seem to struggle in other classes excel in the arts. As a former visual arts teacher, he found that the arts motivate students to learn. As an administrator, Jack supports the arts in education because the arts present students with unique opportunities to express their individuality. Jack's background and experience have enabled him to provide effective leadership through the empowerment of both teachers and students. He claimed, "Culturally responsive teaching means valuing each person's individual differences."

Table 2

Participant Profile Summary –Eagle Crest Public Schools

Name	Age	Position	Years teaching/admin experience	Years at Wings	College Major	Additional Responsibilities
John	38	Visual and performing arts director/ gifted and talented	10	8	Art/ Education	Oversees fine arts and gifted and talented programs
Dr. Pertuisot	60	English Language Learner district administrator	10	20	French/TESL /Education Admin.	Oversees ELL
Jack Sanders	29	Assistant Principal	2	8	Art Education/ Education Admin.	Safety, Sports, Arts

Administrative Interactions with Culturally Responsive Teaching

Eagle Crest Public Schools provides teachers with a fine arts director to oversee the fine arts curriculum at the school. This leadership position works as a liaison between the teachers, the principals, and the public. The school system also provides an English Language Learners specialist to oversee those students learning to speak English as a second language. The fine arts director and ELL are two administrators among many who work closely together in a district that has the culture of school improvement. Schools face the challenge of serving all students in a diverse student body. These administrators use data driven research to guide teachers in a culture of school improvement. These administrators provide the necessary support that teachers need to be successful.

Administrative Influence

John Smith. The ideal relationship between a teacher and a student, as explained by Mr. Smith, is one that is “comfortable.” He stated, “The ideal relationship between teacher and a student...is being comfortable.” Both the student and teacher must be comfortable in the learning environment. When students are not comfortable, they do not receive new knowledge well. According to John, there are multiple ways to build trust and confidence in students. One way is through collaboration. When teachers choose to collaborate with students and let students be part of the decision-making processes, they create an atmosphere of collaboration that supports student exploration and discovery. John stated, “The classroom is co-constructed with the teacher and the student.” This type of atmosphere also encourages positive communication, which is essential to effective teaching. John also stated that teachers must also create an atmosphere where students feel safe enough to fail. John added that failing is part of learning.

According to John, designing curriculum for students in a diverse environment is quite complex. When approaching the task, John proposes that teachers learn about the different cultures that are currently represented in the classroom. With this knowledge, they can design curriculum that effectively speaks to individual cultural backgrounds. John indicated that some of

the most effective lessons teach students the elements of art and principles of design, while incorporating the students' personal identity.

John described a differentiated approach to instruction when teaching to diverse students. He claimed that in an art classroom, there are many different levels of students. John's approach is to have all students start at a beginning level. At this level, students are recording information and are not making decisions. When students progress to the second level some decision-making takes place. Often, the second level is demonstrated through projects in art classes. When students have mastered the second level, they can move into more open-ended projects that require creative thinking.

There are multiple ways to assess student art according to John. He recommends that teachers provide students with rubrics. The rubrics help measure student performance in ways that helps students see their growth. John indicated that rubrics take away much of the subjectivity in grading art. Rubrics provide a list of objectives that can be measured. John suggests that if students are to complete a drawing with multiple values, teachers create a rubric that measures those values.

Dr. Pertuisot. The administrator for ELL works closely with the arts administrator to develop curriculum that embraces diversity. Dr. Pertuisot provides great insight and support to the other departments regarding student diversity and culturally responsive teaching. He stated, "An ideal relationship between the student and teacher...would be one where there's mutual respect." He further expressed, "Teachers actually...have to respect the students in order for the students to respect them." He further stated, "Teachers have to respect the students in order for the students to respect the teachers." He also stated, "Teachers must take time to cultivate this type of relationship with their students."

In order to cultivate a relationship of respect, the teacher must engage in dialogue with students from the very beginning. Through this dialogue, both the teacher and the students develop an understanding of each other's values and culture. The teacher defines the students'

purpose and the type of teacher/student relationship they are going to develop in the classroom. Students have to understand their role and the role of their teacher. In these relationships, the teacher motivates students to achieve. Dr. Pertuisot claims that effective teachers of diverse students learn about the different cultures that are currently present in the classroom. With this knowledge, teachers can design lessons that call on the different groups for contribution.

Dr. Pertuisot described the culturally responsive teaching classroom as student centered. In a student-centered classroom, “The teacher is more like a facilitator of learning,” exclaimed Dr. Pertuisot. He stated, “The teacher is making sure that the students have all the resources and the understanding,” which are needed to complete the work. Dr. Pertuisot further stated, “Teachers allow students to actually develop their own understanding.” Rather than a teacher giving the answer, the teacher creates an environment of inquiry and the students construct their own knowledge. As the facilitator, the teacher guides students through the inquiry. They make certain that students have all of the resources and the understanding needed to produce learning.

Dr. Pertuisot indicated that communication is the key to conveying knowledge to students. If there is going to be effective communication in the classroom, the teacher must spend time explaining the expectations. Dr. Pertuisot added that the teacher must also let the students know what they are going to learn in the classroom. Without effective communication, the students will not be able to understand what they need to accomplish in the classroom. Dr. Pertuisot stated, “Teachers must develop an atmosphere that promotes positive communication.” He further explained, “When students feel threatened, they do not open up to their teacher.” Students need to know that they are not going to be punished. According to Dr. Pertuisot, where there is punishment, there is fear. In order to encourage a positive learning environment, the teacher allows students to express themselves freely, without crossing boundaries. These boundaries exist so that students feel safe in the learning environment.

Dr. Pertuisot claimed that there are several steps that must be taken into consideration when designing curriculum. Teachers must first determine what students are supposed to know

in relation to the state standards. Then, teachers can determine what students are supposed to know in designing the instructional unit. Next, the teacher can write the learning objectives based upon what students need to know. After the learning objectives are defined, the teacher would design an assessment that measures student learning. Last the teacher would design the instructional activities that ensure learning and the mastering skills. For effective instructional activities, teachers need to use differentiated instructional activities and higher-level questioning techniques, while integrating technology into lessons.

According to Dr. Pertuisot, there are teacher centered and student centered classrooms. In the beginning of a unit the teacher must ensure that students understand what is going on with the assignment. During these times, the classroom may be more teacher-centered, which allows for basic instruction. When students have learned the basics concepts of the unit, the teacher can switch the classroom to be more student-centered. To do this, the teacher would create a system of inquiry or questioning that would allow students to find answers through research. After the basis has been established, learning can be deepened. In order to deepen learning; students take an active role in learning when they go beyond the collecting of information. Dr. Pertuisot described active learning as learning where students “actually manipulate to deepen their understanding of the topic.” In this case, manipulation is the exploration of the chosen topic. He suggested that teachers use instruction materials, such as technology, to help students work through the exploration.

When asked about assessment, Dr. Pertuisot responded that there are multiple ways to assess student knowledge. He stated, “Deciding on the correct assessments depends on the goal of the topic. Assessment is not a one size fits all.” For cases where a student is not able to transfer knowledge, he suggests that students complete a product. If students are simply recalling large amounts of information, he suggested that the assessment be designed as multiple choice or simple true/false questions. He also described a time where the goal may be to transfer large amounts of information from one set to another. With this scenario, he suggested that students

create a similar product to demonstrate a student's ability to transfer what he or she learns in the classroom to real world situations.

Jack. When asked about the ideal relationship between a teacher and a student, Jack responded, "I think the ideal relationship between teacher and a student should be...a relationship that fosters communication, fosters growth, and is open." He continued by saying that being "open" must be in the realm of being "appropriate." In his educational career, he has found that being "open" is a way to establish trust with students. To be open, he shares certain aspects of his life with students. The openness that he encourages in the learning environment helps students see him as a teacher and also a person. By allowing students to see different sides of him, Jack is able to establish credibility with his students and foster trusting relationships. He meets students where they are. Jack does not believe that students need many rules, if their teacher has high expectations for them. As part of these high expectations, Jack is able to establish appropriate learning goals with each individual student. Through his relationship with students, he helps them meet these goals.

As a means to foster relationships with students, Jack encourages teachers to invest in the lives of their students. Teachers can do this by attending student sporting events and performances. In addition, they can learn about the interests and concerns of students by having conversations with them, all the while making the student feel important. As a teacher, Jack found that investments such as these enhanced class time. In addition, he encourages teachers to present lessons that allow students to be individuals. As an art teacher, Jack found more success by giving students open-ended assignments that encourage creative thinking. These assignments gave each student the opportunity to create an art piece that was unique to them. In order to provide curriculum that encourages high-level creative thinking, Jack found that students are more motivated to learn when they are presented with choices. To design curriculum that is student centered, Jack believes that students must be part of the decision making process.

According to Jack, effective communication is essential to good teaching. He believes good communication takes place when a teacher is able to engage in positive and constructive criticism with students. Jack also stated that effective communication takes place when teachers create environments where students feel safe enough to communicate their struggles. As an administrator and former teacher, he encourages students to talk to him if they are having problems. In addition, Jack works with the students to develop their strengths and always lets them know when they are doing a great job.

When designing instruction, Jack encourages teachers to use innovative technology. There are many different ways to do this. When Jack was a teacher, he was able to present using online classroom platforms. Of these platforms, he used Showbie and online Google Classroom. To do this, he would set each student up with accounts. Jack also found video teaching quite effective for students. Instead of lecturing for an hour, he made instructional videos for students that can be accessed at home or school. In addition, he had his students submit their work digitally through the Internet. Jack inferred that giving students easy access to information allows both teachers and students to work more efficiently. He added that by presenting instructional lessons through innovative technology teachers can further help their students to develop their skills of investigation. According to Jack, the “ideal instruction is one based on student self-discovery of knowledge.” As an administrator, he encourages teachers to develop rubrics for their students. The rubrics allow students to self-assess, which help students, take ownership in their learning.

Narrative Portraits of Art Education at Eagle Crest

The fine arts department within Eagle Crest Public Schools garnishes respect from school community due to their hard work and ability to reach different kinds of students. Since I also teach art, I was very intrigued with the manner in which the district supports the visual arts. Support is evident due to the fact that teachers have an administrator that serves as an advocate for all of the fine arts in the district. Administrative support can also be observed by the way in

which the district sets aside time for teachers to engage in professional learning communities and the ongoing professional development.

At each of the schools, there is ongoing display of art in different places in each of these buildings, including the Eagle Crest Public Schools Board Office. Student art works create an inviting atmosphere for students and guests in the building because their works represent the enriched learning that takes place at each of the schools. As a guest, I enjoyed seeing the art and felt connected to the students because their art clearly expressed their interests, hopes, and dreams for the future.

In my observations, I saw the successes that are being achieved by each one of these visual art teachers. In order to provide students with challenging and exciting new curriculum, teachers spent large amounts of time planning and preparing lessons for students. In each of these classes, teachers present instruction by incorporating auditory, visual, and tactile learning. In addition, teachers integrate technology into the visual arts classroom in a multitude of different ways. In some ways, teachers use technology to assess student learning. In other ways technology is used as a medium in which to create works of art.

Before each class started, teachers at both schools greeted students at the door, welcoming them to class for that day. During this welcome, teacher had a chance to connect with students. This simple gesture sets a positive tone in each one of these classes. When students come into the rooms, they sit down and are ready to begin class. Several teachers began class by asking students a series of questions relative to the current topical lesson. Questions were developed through the professional learning communities and incorporated scaffolding as a means to build upon existing knowledge. Questions were also inclusive of examples of visual art created by people from many different cultures.

In each class, teachers demonstrated how to create a work of art. In doing this, teachers could ensure that students understand the process that it takes to create a quality art piece. After the demonstration, students would engage in practice in order to master the required skills needed

to create a work of art. Once students had acquired the necessary skills, the teachers presented students with open ended creative problems to solve. These problems had certain criteria that students had to achieve when making the art. Students could solve the problem by addressing such criteria and incorporating his or her personal interests and cultural backgrounds.

Education at the Local Level

Wings Public High School

History and Mission

Rich in diversity, Wings Public High School serves the whole child through an innovative educational environment. The mission statement of the school is “To Educate for Success.” The mission statement of the Wings Public High School envelops the school and the outside communities. In order to ensure the success of all students, everyone including the community must do their part. With this belief, the school motto is, “Everyone Succeeds Together.” The curriculum offered by Wings Public High School encourages exploration, discovery, and creativity. Besides these, students are encouraged to develop morally and spiritually, and have a positive self-concept.

Wings Public Schools was the second high school formed in the Eagle Crest Public School system. The first graduating class was in 1970. During that time, the school had many financial challenges. Since that time, the alumni of the school gathered and organized a foundation that provides financial assistance and support to the many students attending Wings Public High School.

School Setting

Wings Public Schools is located on the southwestern side of an urban area. The school building is a nice facility providing 1800 students with a safe atmosphere that enables them to learn. The school sits on a lakeside in a quiet and scenic area. Surrounding the school are beautiful homes as well as several apartment complexes demonstrating a diverse socio-economic situation. The student population at Wings includes 41% white, 21% black, 2% Asian, 33%

Hispanic, and 3% Native American. The percentage of students receiving free and reduced lunches is 85% of the school population. The pie charts in figure 5 and 6 show the student demographics and the percentage of students receiving free and reduced lunches.

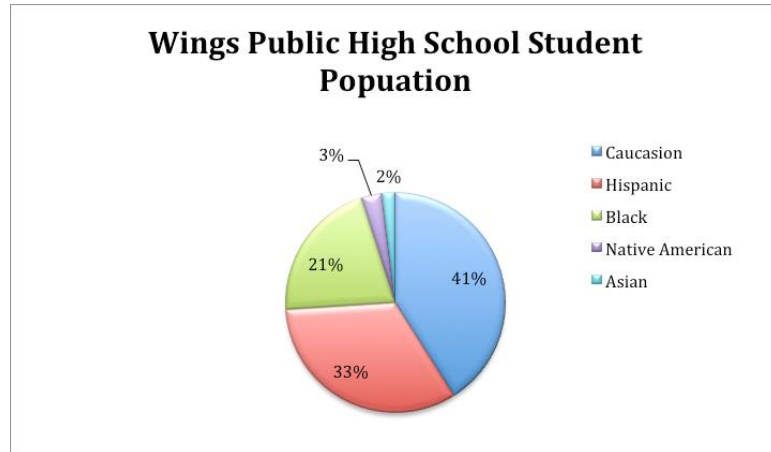


Figure 5. Student Demographics of Wings Public High School

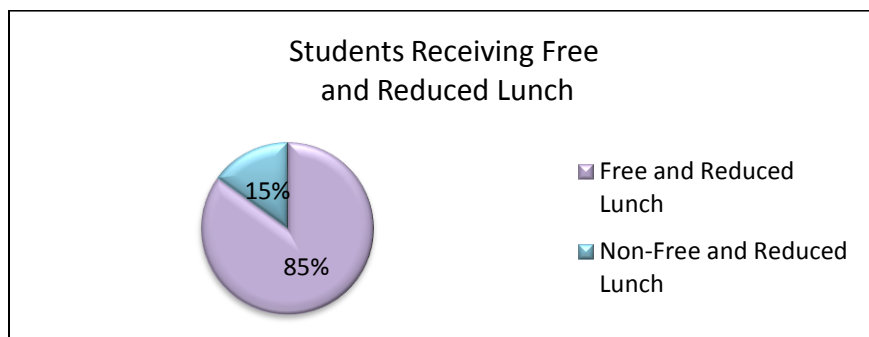


Figure 6. Students Receiving Free and Reduced Lunches at Wings Public High School

All students must have one art credit for graduation. The school offers 19 different units for fine arts credit. Currently, the school is undergoing a comprehensive school improvement plan to improve student performances in the many different subject areas. The school community understands the importance of the fine arts and encourages students to engage in these programs.

The administration at the school consists of one building principal, four assistant principals, and one principal intern. One assistant principal specifically handles special education. Another assistant handles students enrolled in Project Hope. The two remaining assistants and intern are assigned to specific grade levels to take care of the remaining students.

Wings Public High School employs approximately 98 schoolteachers, 10 secretaries, and 20 kitchen workers.

The school received a 74% C on the latest state report card and is undergoing a comprehensive school improvement plan. As a way to improve student achievement, teachers receive professional development in every area including the fine arts. The school community understands the importance of the fine arts and encourages students to engage in these programs.

Building Structure

Two murals, one on each side of the entrance to the welcome center, greet guests as they enter the building at Wings Public High School. The art creates a timeless feeling, connecting today's students with those from the past. The murals illustrate the school mascot, the pioneer, excelling at sporting events through the spirit of teamwork. The murals illustrate camaraderie and endow students with a sense that they will not embark on the educational journey alone.

In addition to the murals, the 45-year-old building looks new and is well kept. Located on the school grounds is a track and field house. Inside the school building, there is a gymnasium for sporting events and an auditorium that exists for the performing arts. Like every school in the district, the building has undergone several additions and updates to accommodate the growing student population existing on the southwestern side of the district.

Art Club

Art club is social service program at the school that provides students with a place to belong. In art club, students engage in service learning opportunities for the school and the greater community. Many students taking art choose to be part of the art club. Art club meets in one of the art rooms one day a month from 3:30-4:30 on a Tuesday or a Wednesday. The program provides painted banners for school games and engages in raising money for the school art program. In addition, visiting artists and art professors at local universities visit the art club to present art and recruit students.

Professional Development

Professional Learning Communities. On Late Start Wednesday, the fine arts department joins together forming a professional learning community. The intent of the meeting is to improve student academic performances and increase enrollment in the arts at the school sites. In the 2015-2016 school year, the fine arts department at Wings Public High School set three Smart Goals. The community provides strategies to ensure that these goals are met. The goals and the strategies for meeting these goals are as follow.

1. The pass rate for the final exam in Art I will be 85%.

Strategy: Teachers will make common assessments for art I. Students will be tested on learned information through quizzes, nine weeks and semester exams. In addition, students will answer a question before they leave the classroom each day in order to check comprehension of material.

2. The pass rate for the Advanced Placement exam will be 85%.

Strategy: When students take AP Studio art they will focus on the works in their concentration. Student projects will provide students with creative problems to solve. These projects are open-ended and have a set of standards that each student is to achieve.

3. The department will increase enrollment in the AP studio art course by 50%.

Strategy: students taking art III will have a complete half of the AP portfolio before leaving the course. Like AP studio art, students will be given a series of creative problems to solve that are open-ended. They will present their breadth sections in power point forms as part of their semester final.

In addition to these goals and strategies, the professional learning community takes weekly progress checks. These checks provide the community with the current state of student performance and enrollment. With this knowledge, the community can adjust its plan and make changes wherever necessary.

Advanced Placement. All of the art teachers at Wings Public High School attended AP training for a week during the summer months. During this time, they were able to develop a plan to improve student academic performance for all students in the visual arts. In addition to AP training, teachers attended other programs that provide teachers with insight into helping teachers respond to diversity.

Oklahoma Art Education Association (OAEA). The teachers at Wings are members of the Oklahoma Art Education Association. They attend the workshops and conferences hosted by OAEA. One of the teacher's has served on the state board for OAEA.

Participant Profiles

Maria. Maria is a beginning teacher entering her second year of teaching. Out of her love of art and teaching, Maria chose to become an art educator. Coming from a Hispanic culture, Maria is able to share her culture and language speaking skills with the diverse student population at Wings Public High School. Maria teaches 3-Dimensional Design classes, Art I, and Art for special needs. She explained that culturally responsive teaching is teaching that adapts to the needs of students.

According to Maria, the teacher student relationships take time to build. She discovered that many students just need someone to talk to. As result, she has provided a safe place where students can come to share their ideas and talk. During different times of the day, students come to her room to talk and share their ideas. Because of her ability to communicate with students, Maria has been able to establish positive relationships with students

Gloria. Gloria was valedictorian of her high school and pursued a degree in medicine at one of the state universities. After two years of college, however, Gloria found that she did not love medicine. Rather, she developed a deep interest in the visual arts and found it challenging. Gloria is a ten-year veteran art educator entering her eleventh year of teaching. Before coming to Wings Public High School, Gloria served as an art educator in a small district in the inner city. There she taught sixth through twelfth grades. In the inner city, she gained experience with

diverse student population. From that experience, Gloria learned how to accept each student's cultural difference. Through that process, she learned how to best connect with students in order to teach them. Gloria received her National Board Certification in 2010. Gloria is the head of the visual art department and serves on the gifted and talented committee. She teaches ceramics I, II, and III, and Advanced Placement Studio Art.

According to Gloria, culturally responsive teaching means understanding the different cultures currently present in the classroom. When teachers understand the different cultures present in the classroom, they can respond accordingly. With knowledge of the different cultures, teachers can provide effective instruction to students. When designing lessons, Gloria takes care and consideration to provide a project that is not offensive to any culture. Gloria designs lessons that relates to different areas of the students' cultural background. However, she finds a student's individuality is of the utmost importance when providing effective instruction to diverse students.

Sherrie. Sherrie began college as a nursing student. As she progressed through school, she soon discovered that the field of nursing was not for her. As a result, she decided to pursue her love of the visual arts. Sherrie chose to become an art educator because she wanted to share her passion of art with others. Growing up, Sherrie encountered many challenges. Art served as her platform of self-expression and provided an anchor during those tumultuous years. Entering her third year of teaching, Sherrie strives to make a difference in the lives of her students. Sherrie recalled the teachers that made a difference in her life. According to Sherrie, these teachers taught their subjects with conviction and humility. These qualities inspired her to learn and set goals for herself. Like her former teachers, Sherrie strives to make a difference.

According to Sherrie, culturally responsive teaching means being open to different ideas and ways of thinking. She further explained that what may be considered normal to her may be offensive to someone else. As a teacher, Sherrie strives to learn about the various cultures that exist in her classroom. Such knowledge has helped her establish positive relationships with students. She teaches Art I, Art II, and Advanced Placement Studio Art.

Adrianna. Adrianna is another beginning teacher entering her second year of teaching.

Like the other participants, Adrianna chose to become a teacher because she has a love for art and loves working with students. Her knowledge of technology has been a great asset to the other art teachers. She teaches both Graphic Design and Art I. Adrianna stated, “Culturally responsive teaching means that, teachers, will develop or transform their methods or ways of teaching in response to the culture they see in front of them.” Through this openness, students feel comfortable and are able to learn.

Table 3

Participant Profile Summary –Wings

Name	Age	Position	Years teaching/admin experience	Years at Wings	College Major	Additional Responsibilities
Maria	24	Art Teacher Art I/Art 3D Art for special needs	1	1	Art Education	Art club sponsor, School improvement committee
Gloria	34	Art Teacher AP Studio Art ArtIII/Ceramics I&II/Art III	10	2	Art Education	Department head, mentor teacher, art club sponsor,
Sherrie	25	Art Teacher Art I/Art II/AP Studio Art	2	8	Art Education	Art club sponsor
Adrianna	24	Art Teacher	1	1	Art Education	Art club sponsor

Classroom Setting

Wings has three rooms that were designed specifically for the visual arts. An additional math class with a sink was transformed into another studio space for graphic design and

introduction to art classes. Each classroom is equipped with tables, sinks, drawers for artwork, shelves for books, and appropriate technology. Students' assignments are posted on bulletin boards along with learning goals and objectives for each unit. These clear expectations that have been set for students create a safe working atmosphere for students to enjoy the creative experience.

All three classrooms with the exception of this former math room are on the same hallway. Connecting the classes are adjoining storage rooms that house the kilns for pottery and the department's art supplies. Teachers can move freely from room to room without entering the hallway, offering help and assistance to fellow teachers whenever necessary. The close proximity of these three classes creates a sense of unity and belonging among the art students. Figure 6 provides a floor plan for the art department showing the three classrooms and the hallway. Aside from these rooms, there is another art room located in the math hall of the school. The floor plan for this room is seen in Figure 7. Each room has cabinets, tables, sinks, and student and teacher work stations.

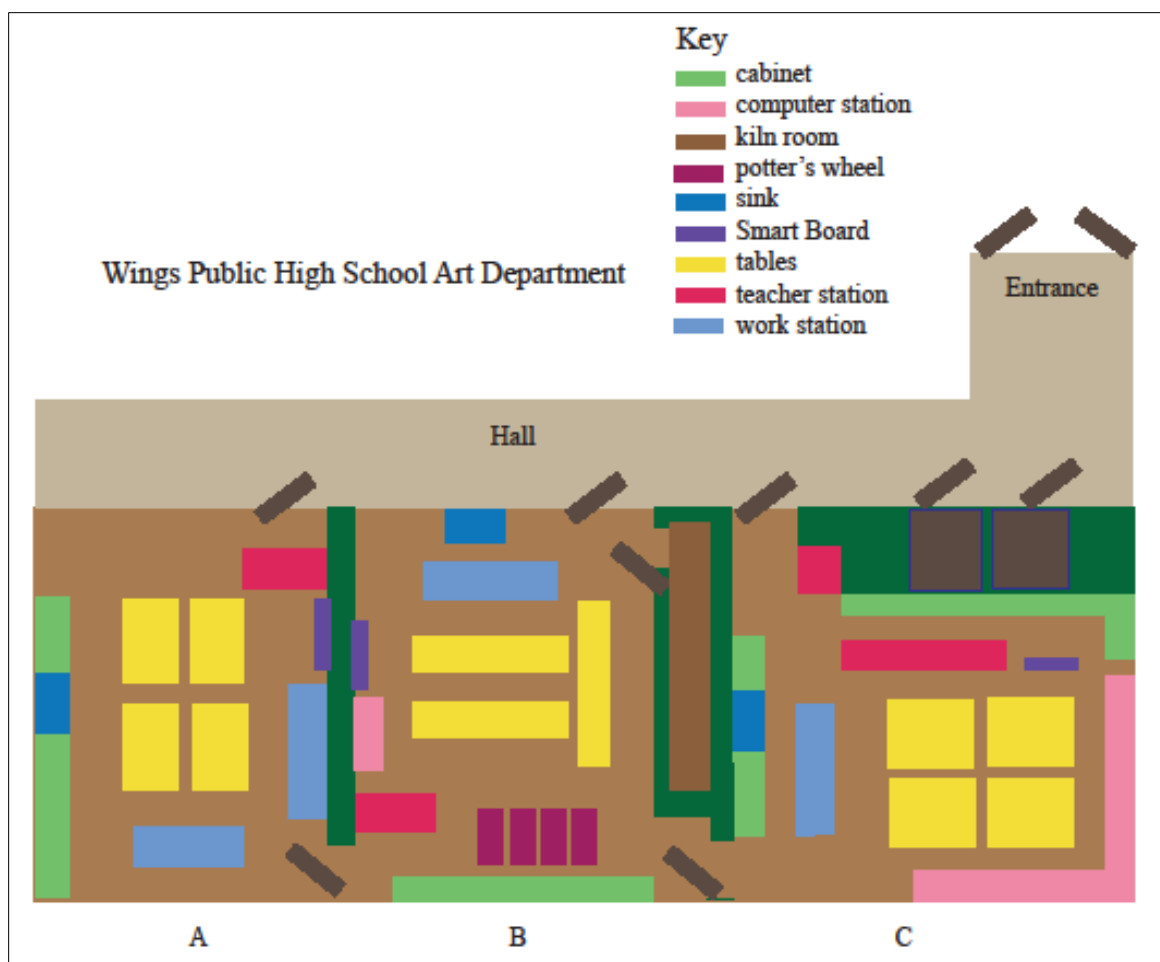


Figure 7. Diagram of Wings Art Department.

Maria. The classroom where Maria teaches is located at the end of the hallway. Her room is “A” in Figure VI. In Maria’s room, there are posters of the elements and principles of design located in a corner of the room. On another wall, the objectives for each lesson are posted. The room has a sink, student computer, art books, and plenty of art supplies. The room has a Smart Board that is used for presentations during instructional times. Along the cabinet space, student work is stored. The classroom is well organized and provides much space to create art.

Gloria. The middle classroom is a very large room that provides Gloria’s students with a great space to create original works of art. For organization, Gloria divides her classroom into different work stations. Students move comfortably around each station. If students need to conduct research, they may utilize the computer station located in the front of the room. When

students are working on their projects, they sit around the tables in the central area of the room. Those students using the potter's wheels sit at the farthest end of the room. The storage and kiln area is also a station on the side of room. The room is equipped with cabinets, a sink, three potter's wheels and tools for working with clay, art supplies, and books. Centrally located on the wall are posters of the elements and principles of design. In addition, Gloria posts the objectives for each class assignment.

Sherrie. Students come to Gloria's room first when entering the art department. Since the advanced placement test requires technology, there are twenty-five computers located in Sherrie's room. The computers align the back two walls. In addition, there is a portable Smart Board for instructional purposes. Located over the computers are the objectives for each assignment. In the opposite corner are posters of the elements of art and the principles of design. Students sit around four large tables and can communicate freely. The room has cabinets, a sink, art supplies, and art books.

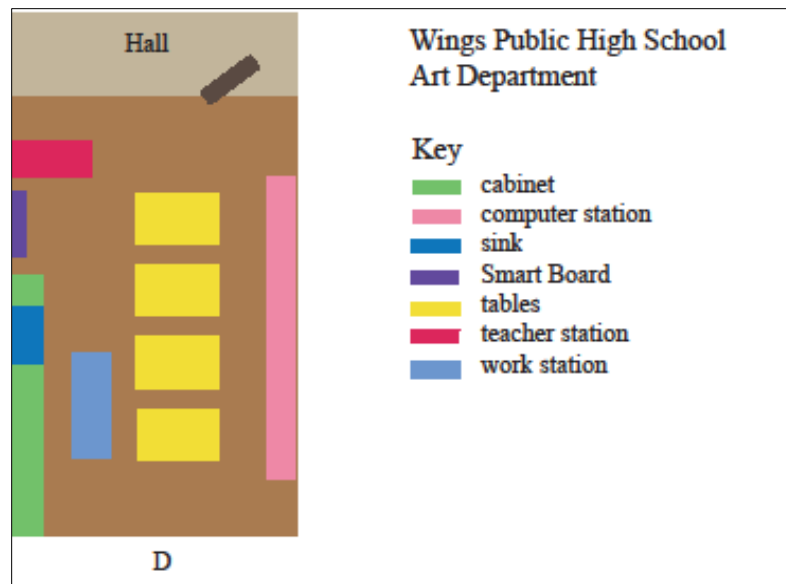


Figure 8. Diagram of an Art Classroom at Wings Public High School

Adrianna. Since the school population has grown in the past several years, the school was able to hire another teacher. A room formerly used for math instruction has been

reconfigured to accommodate Adrianna. As a result, Adrianna's room is not located in the art department. Her room is located in another section of the building. The room is equipped with thirty computers that are used for graphic design classes.

Teacher Interactions with Culturally Responsive Teaching

Maria. According to Maria, the ideal relationship between a teacher and student is one of trust. In a trusting relationship, students feel comfortable and safe enough to learn. Maria stated, "The ideal relationship between student and teacher needs to be trust. They need to be comfortable with you as well as you with them." Maria wants her students to see her as a teacher and as a person who cares about them. In order to develop a trusting relationship with students, Maria visits with students asking about their day or simply joking with them. Through this communication, Maria is able to detect if a student is having a bad day. At this point, Maria speaks with the students one-on-one, letting them know that she cares. She also stated, "Telling them that you can help them builds trust as well because...they see you are trying to help them." When Maria talks to students about their grades, she reassures her students. If students are failing, she lets them know that she is there to help them. At times, Maria feels that she is more a counselor than a teacher. As she continues to teach, she finds herself listening more to students. To her, simply listening to students lets them know that she cares about them.

Maria holds that if students are going to learn they must be able to understand the material. Since she has the ability to easily go back and forth from English to Spanish, she is able to assist the English Language Learners in understanding that material. In addition using her ability to speak two languages, Maria wants her students to feel comfortable enough with her to ask questions. Maria exclaimed, "I can explain to them exactly what we are doing. I think they feel more comfortable with me because I speak their language." Maria makes herself easily accessible to students because some students do not feel comfortable to ask a question in front of the class. One way that Maria does this is to move around the room during the students' studio

time to ensure that each individual student understands the material. Maria also makes herself available to students before and after school in cases that students do not understand.

When designing curriculum, Maria's first step is to consult the state standards and her professional learning community at her school. Once the student learning needs have been determined, she considers the likes and dislikes of her students as well as their cultural backgrounds. Maria stated, "I try to think of ways that I know they'll find interesting." Because of her sensitivity to these issues, she is able to design curriculum that is quite stimulating for students.

To help students understand new concepts, Maria uses scaffolding to connect student experience with new knowledge. Such an approach allows students to build upon their existing knowledge. This approach also helps students understand difficult concepts as well as develop the skills that are needed to complete the artwork. Once students understand the concepts and skills, Maria gives her students a creative problem to solve. In order to solve the problem, students must address the criteria established at the beginning of the assignment while incorporating their personal and cultural backgrounds.

Maria provides her students with differentiated instruction. She teaches lessons that appeal to the visual, auditory, and tactile learners. For visual learners, she designs presentations that outline the assignment and provide students with many examples of art. As she lectures, she appeals to the auditory learners. When Hispanic students are unable to understand English, she translates the concepts into Spanish to ensure that everyone fully understands the new concepts. As part of the lecture, Maria will demonstrate a technique for her students Maria stated, "I usually introduce whatever it is we are doing, and then I may give some background about it." Maria further indicated that she gives visual examples to further explain the assignments. Some of these examples may be demonstrations of the mediums and processes that are used in making art. Maria also stated, "Most of them probably are visual learners so they want to see me do it." The

visuals also help the students with limited English skills. After the presentation of the lesson, students engage in hands-on activities of making art.

As the students engage in their work, Maria moves from table to table conversing with students. In some instances, Maria sits down with a particular student to discuss his or her art project. By so doing, Maria continues to develop a relationship with her students and is able to communicate effectively to them. She has a special way of making students feel very safe and comfortable. According to Maria, students need to feel safe in order to feel creative.

Gloria. When asked about the ideal relationship between the teacher and the student, Gloria stated, “The ideal relationship for me would be that of mutual respect between teacher and student.” In order to achieve this kind of relationship, Gloria first speaks to students in language that they understand. Then, she lets them know that she does not immediately trust people that she does not know. By making this confession, Gloria is able to start connecting with students. By opening up with students in this way, Gloria lets students know that she can relate to them and that she cares. In addition, she makes a point to speak to students if they are having problems. She stated, “If they’re having a bad day or whatever, I always ask them, what’s going on? And slowly get them to open up to me.” As students begin to trust, she continues developing the teacher student relationship throughout the school year.

Gloria views curriculum as a building process. She uses scaffolding to build upon existing knowledge. When teaching ceramics, Gloria presents lessons in ways that helps students gain basic skills. Once students have learned basic skills, she is able to help students further develop. With the basic technical skills, Gloria can more effectively help students grasp complex theoretical concepts, such as the elements and principles of design. By providing skill building and theoretical lessons, she is able to help students develop their own artistic voice.

To foster the development of student voice, Gloria designs lessons as a creative problem to solve. One such lesson that Gloria teaches covers is surrealism. For this lesson, students choose two random objects that hold personal meaning. In order to solve the problem, students

must make the unrelated objects relate by combining the two into one ceramic art piece. In reference to the surrealism pieces, Gloria stated, “That was the most successful in seeing their voice and a little bit of their personalities coming out.” Because students have a personal connection with the subject matter, they are motivated to learn through the production of a quality piece of art.

According to Gloria, the ideal instruction is to have a presentation at the beginning of class. She stated, “I...have a presentation portion at the beginning, where you’re introducing whatever it is.” This allows her to present the techniques and different artists to students. When Gloria presents a lesson, she establishes learning goals for her students at the beginning of the assignment. As students engage in the art making, they are to concentrate their efforts on meeting these learning goals. Learning goals and objectives for each assignment are posted on a central wall located in her classroom. Posting learning goals and objectives helps students stay focused on achieving the assignment’s purpose. After the presentation, Gloria gives time for the students to brainstorm ideas for the art that they going to create. Gloria further stated, “Then...they start their planning process.”

For effective learning, Gloria presents students with differentiated instructional practices that accommodate different learning styles. Gloria designs her instruction to appeal to the auditory, visual, and kinesthetic learners. For the auditory learners, Gloria discusses different artists with students. To help illustrate the concepts of these artists, she provides students with visuals using the Smart Board. As students engage in the process of using an art medium to make art, they learn kinesthetically.

Gloria assesses her students in a variety of ways. To ensure that students are learning the art vocabulary and theory, she gives written quizzes. After students finish an artwork, they use a rubric to grade themselves. According to Gloria, rubrics remove much of the subjectivity in grading in art. The rubric allows students to reflect on their learning experience. Through reflection, students are able to see their strengths and are more readily able to improve on their

weaknesses. Another form of assessment that provides self-reflection is the art portfolio. The portfolio allows the students to see their personal and artistic growth. Self-reflection helps students take ownership in learning.

Sherrie. When asked about the ideal teacher student relationship Sherrie responded, “The ideal relationship between teachers and students would be one where the students can obviously ask questions without being worried of being dismissed.” According to Sherrie, if students feel that they are going to be punished they will not be open to communicate. She stated, “What I want from the student...is an open line of communication.” Sherrie further stated, “If I’m doing something that doesn’t meet their need...I would hope that they would at least tell me. “ Sherrie claims that the students need to feel emotionally safe if they are going to confide in their teacher. As a result, Sherrie promotes an openness that allows students to feel comfortable her in the classroom. Such a relationship makes the students feel comfortable enough to learn.

According to Sherrie, good communication takes place when a teacher can communicate ideas to students. In reference to students, Sherrie stated, “Communication is how I can communicate better ideas to them.” She further stated, “Communicating in a diverse environment can be challenging.” At times, Sherrie asks her students open-ended questions that promote creative thinking. If a student is not performing well, Sherrie takes care in helping her student achieve the expectations of the assignment. To do this, she keeps the conversation positive by showing the student his or her strengths in the assignment. Through building a relationship with her students, she is able to effectively communicate with her them. Through the communication that takes place, she learns about the interests of the students. This information helps her design curriculum that is stimulating to their interests.

When designing curriculum, Sherrie wants to select and design lessons that intrigue students. To do this, she selects an artist from history and makes his or her work relevant to the lives of students today. Sherrie stated, “I try to think what they would be into for their age.” She researches interesting facts about a historical artist and connects that information to the lives of

students. Sherrie also finds ways to use technology in teaching. For example, when teaching perspective, she has the students photograph different buildings with their phones and then incorporate these photos into their drawings.

In order to keep the interests of students, Sherrie designs lessons based upon modern culture. One such lesson that Sherrie teaches is graffiti street art using different contemporary artists such as Banksy. In order to teach the lesson, Sherrie will have the students examine the differences between graffiti and street art. Then, she will have the students discuss how the elements of art and principles of design interact in the art. Students then go onto to make their own creations.

Adrianna. According to Adrianna, the ideal relationship between a teacher and student is one that promotes openness. Adrianna stated, “students need to feel comfortable enough to try new things.” She said that for this relationship to happen, trust must be established. There are many ways to build a trusting relationship with students. Besides the comfortable feeling that students have in her classroom, Adrianna attends many of the school events to see her students perform or play sports in order to be more available to students. In addition, she co-sponsors the art club with the other teachers. These times outside of the class, helps her to build the kind of trust that is needed for effective teaching.

Adrianna discussed the importance of listening skills in the communication process with students. Simply by listening, Adrianna has learned a great deal about her students as well as herself. Some of Adrianna’s students have difficult home lives. At times these students need someone to talk to. Adrianna has also found that students will talk when they are ready to do so. She strives to help students find their voices artistically. She lets them know that everyone has a story worth being heard. In order to help students find their voices, she presents them with many opportunities to be successful. She also encourages students to be themselves and to not worry about the opinions of others.

Teachers' Interaction with Administration

Maria. Maria teaches an art class for special education; she works closely with the special education teacher and the special education administrator. Maria also speaks Spanish, which enables her to work closely with administrators in meeting student needs. Maria indicated that the administrators have been very complementary of the work that she does with students. In addition, the administrators provide encouraging support to her students throughout the day. She recognizes that the administrators are very busy and lack the time to be present at art events such as art club.

Gloria. According to Gloria, there are several administrators in the building. Each one plays a different type of role. One of the building administrators provides the disciplinary support that teachers need. Another administrator provides support by updating teachers of any school news that happens during the day. Gloria also claimed that her administrators have been financially supportive. Recently, the administration gave the art department \$600.00 for the purchase of shelves for the kiln.

Sherrie. The administration provides support to Sherrie through encouragement and praise. The administration complements the work that she does with students. Sherrie also stated that the administration has designated areas within the school to showcase student talent. However, Sherrie feels that the administration could be more active in this area. Students have not had a special student exhibition. She feels like the administration could be more supportive in showcasing student talent if such an exhibition could be coordinated.

Adrianna. As a second year teacher, Adrianna indicated that the administration lets her structure class the way she wants. One of Adrianna's administrators has been a real asset to her. He minored in art during college and knows the importance of fine arts in education. Adrianna alluded to the fact that she has several at risk students. She mentioned that these students feel safe in her art classes. According to Adrianna, the administration helps her meet the needs of the

students. In addition, the administration has provided her with the financial resources that are needed to teach the class.

Cultural Influences

Wings Public High School's student population is diverse and proposes many challenges to teachers. Finding a way to meet the varied of needs of all students is quite challenging. Students are easily influenced by their surroundings. In the school setting, students from each ethnicity form a cultural group. These groups can be seen in the hallways of the school and inside the classrooms. There are commonalities that exist in all students. The majority of students have cell phones, and technology is used throughout the curriculum. The students are strongly influenced by modern culture relevant to their lives.

Narrative Portraits of Art Education at Wings

When I entered the school, I observed a large mural that was painted by the visual arts department. The mural displayed the mascot playing sports and excelling academically. As I walked down the hallways to the art class, I was able to see art displayed in different places. The artwork revealed the personal interests, hopes, and dreams of visual art students. Upon entering the art department, I was impressed by the overall structure of the learning facility. For the most part, teachers could move freely from one class to the other. The closeness of the classrooms supported the close knit art community inside the school. The structure was quite new and fully equipped with all kinds of art equipment, including computers and SmartBoards.

When class started, the teachers walked to the doorways of the classrooms in order to greet students as they entered the classroom. During this time, teachers connected with students. They discussed the lesson for the day, last night's game, or what they were planning for the weekend. The classroom environments were truly inviting and welcoming to students. When students entered the classroom, they were immediately seated and ready for class to begin. In

each of the classes, students were extremely respectful, courteous, and helpful toward one another.

When starting the lesson, the teachers asked students questions that related to the current art project. The teachers exercised the use of scaffolding because their questions required students to relate existing knowledge to new knowledge. With each question, teachers presented artists and art works from different cultures. Students could identify with these artists because the art and artists represented the cultures that existed in the classroom. After teachers presented the lessons, they walked around the classroom working with each student. During these times, teachers listened, offered advice, and encouraged students. Such actions supported the teachers' ability to solidify positive working relationships with students.

After the teachers presented the lesson to students, students practiced the skills and techniques necessary to complete the assignment. When the students developed these skills, the teachers would present students with a creative problem to solve. Students then had to solve their creative problem using the newly acquired skills and techniques by fusing their personal interests and backgrounds into the works.

Talon Public High School

History and Student Population

Talon Public High School was built in 1958 and is the oldest high school in the district that is currently being used. Since that time, the district has remodeled adding new classrooms and building new additions that include a track and field house.

According to the state report card, the student population at Talon Public High School reached 1,782, in the 2013-2014 school year. The demographical breakdown for these students includes: 43% Caucasian, 26% black, 6% Asian, 23% Hispanic, and 3% Native American. The district population for the school is 122,633 and the poverty rate is 16%. The average household income is \$62,910. Those students who come from single parent families is 42%. The percentage of student parents who have attended college is 32%. Also, the percentage of parents

with less than a high school education is 11%. Students who are eligible to receive free and reduced lunches are 73%. The school presents students with 21 different units for possible fine art electives. All students are required to have one half unit of art credit.

The school employs 94 teachers with varied backgrounds. The percentage of teachers on the faculty with advanced degrees is 32.3%. In addition, the average number of years of experience is 10.3 years. In addition to teachers, the school employs support staff in many different areas, including cafeteria, building maintenance, custodial, busing, office assistance and teacher assistance. Figure 9 shows the demographics for the student population at Talon Public High Schools. Students receiving free and reduced lunches can be seen in Figure 10.

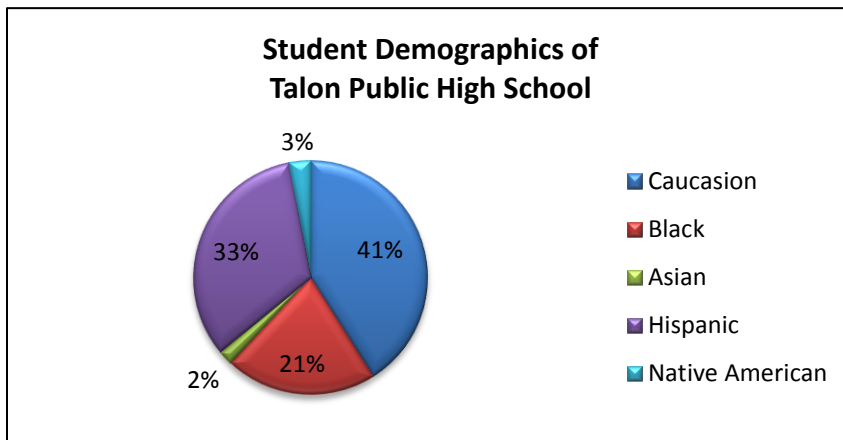


Figure 9. Student Demographics of Talon Public High School

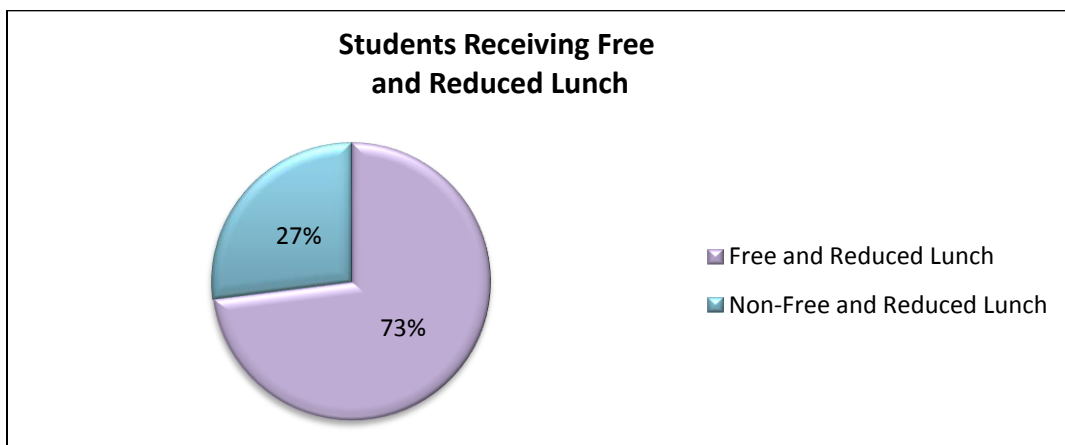


Figure 10. Students Receiving Free and Reduced Lunch at Talon Public High School

Mission and Vision

Recently, the school implemented a comprehensive school improvement plan as a way to improve student literacy. The push is to make all students college or career ready by graduation. As a way to enlist the support from the school and the outside community, a vision was developed that focuses on improving student literacy. To support the vision, the major goal is to have the students learn through reading and be able to express their learning through writing.

In order to improve overall student academic performance, the school has implemented various programs to improve student academic performance the area of reading. One program provides students with an enjoyable means to improve literacy through reading. Students can attend a special luncheon during certain times of the year to discuss great literary works. The mission of this program is to provide students with a positive intellectual experience through reading and the discussion of literature.

Building Structure

Since the building of the original structure in 1958, there have been many renovations and additions. The physical structure is located in an older community surrounded by older homes and businesses making the campus landlocked. Recently, a bond election was passed for the building of new stadiums at each of the high schools. Talon was the first school to receive a new stadium. Besides sports, there are many activities that take place on the campus grounds. Some of these activities can be seen as one walks down the hallways of building. For example, subjects like the fine arts had wall displays showing student involvement throughout the building.

Art Club

Outside of classroom instruction, teachers at Talon further expose students to the visual arts through Art Club. The club provides an effective means for teachers to interact and build relationship with students. The Art Club brings college recruiters and guest artists to the school. In addition, the Art Club conducts student art shows during different times of the school year.

Professional Development

Professional Learning Communities. To focus on school improvement, the teachers engage in professional learning communities on Late Start Wednesdays. During this time, the teachers develop the visual arts curriculum. The department is developing curriculum that supports English Language Learners. Like its sister school Wings, Talon teachers set Smart Goals and develop strategies to achieve these goals. The following is a list of Smart Goals and the strategies to reach these goals.

1. The number of art students demonstrating knowledge of art vocabulary will increase to 80% of all art students. Students will demonstrate knowledge through writing.

Strategy: The strategy will be to test students in order to identify areas that are problematic. Teachers will reteach these areas.

2. The number of art students demonstrating understanding of the elements and principles of design will increase to 80%.

Strategy: The strategy will be to have students create original works of visual art using elements of art and principles of design.

3. The number of art students incorporating cultural and historical contexts in created works of art will increase to 80%.

Strategy: Students will conduct research to incorporate cultural and historical contexts in original works of art.

Advanced Placement. The art teachers received Advanced Placement training during the summer months. This training has enabled the art teachers to establish an Advanced Placement program. During these trainings, teachers received curriculum ideas that have been implemented into their classrooms. Currently, there is one AP Studio Art teacher at Talon.

Oklahoma Art Education Association (OAEA). Teachers attend the Oklahoma Arts Institute and receive further studio art training. One of the teachers at the school is a member of the Oklahoma Arts Education Association and considers the professional organization a great

resource for her teaching. At the last OAEA conference, she was able to present to other art teachers new curriculum ideas for working with students. The teachers at Talon also receive technology training and have integrated technology into their curriculum.

Participant Profiles

Laura. Laura is the department chair for the visual arts department at Talon Public Schools. She has taught art at Talon for twenty years and has taught all levels of art classes. Her favorite class to teach is clay. Recently, Laura presented curriculum ideas at the Oklahoma Art Education Association convention. She has served on the OAEA board and continues to provide leadership and support for art teachers working in her district and throughout the state of Oklahoma. She indicated that she loves her job and finds it quite rewarding.

To Laura, culturally responsive teaching means putting students in touch with their own individuality. She expressed, “I want them to research and look into what has made them become the person they are.” In Laura’s classes, students often research and explore their cultural and personal backgrounds. At times, she has different students represent the various cultures that are present in her room. In her curriculum, she encourages great discussion through comparing and contrasting cultural differences. These experiences help her students understand themselves and better understand each other. Upon the enlightenment, students share a common understanding. Laura’s unique ability of having the students embrace their different cultures in the classroom allows her students to experience the benefits of a world classroom.

Emily. Emily received her Masters of Fine Arts from the University of California. She is a professional artist and served as a college professor and department chair of both private and state colleges. She has also served as the chair for visual arts education in the state of Oklahoma. As part of her experience, Emily attended a diverse public high school in the state of Oklahoma during the early 1970s. Her personal experience gives Emily great insight into working effectively with students from diverse cultures. Emily has a great deal of fun with students and truly enjoys teaching. According to Emily, teaching students something new is very gratifying.

Emily is a dynamic teacher that values the uniqueness of each individual student. She has a tremendous ability to develop relationships with her students. To Emily, culturally responsive teaching means being able to identify, recognize, and understand a person's background.

Table 4

Participant Profile Summary –Talon Public High Schools

Name	Age	Position	Years teaching experience	Years at Talon	College Major	Additional Responsibilities
Emily	60	Art Teacher Art I & Ceramics I, II, & III	10	3	Art/ Education	Art Club
Laura	50	Art Teacher Art I & Art II	10	20	Art Education	Art Club

Classroom Setting

The art classrooms at Talon are in different parts of the building. Each classroom is equipped with cabinets, sinks, and tables. Classrooms have windows and are able to let in natural lighting. Classrooms have Smart Boards, art supplies, and art books.

Laura. Since Laura teaches both Ceramics and Art I, she has two rooms that are joined together by a central door. Room “F” is used for art I. In this room, there is a computer and Smart Board. Room “G” is the ceramic room. The kiln room is located in additional room off of the main ceramic room. The room is also equipped with potter's wheels and tools for working in clay. The Art I class has the Smart Board and student computer. The floor plan for Laura's classroom can be seen in Figure 11.

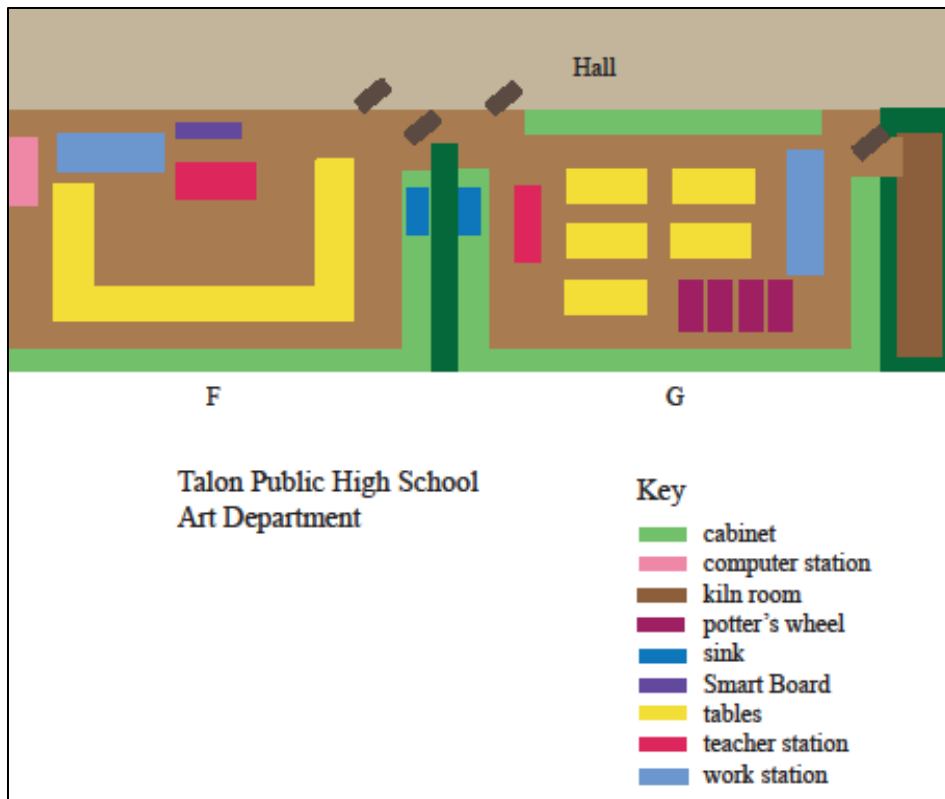


Figure 11. Floor plan for Laura's classroom, Talon Public High School Art Department

Emily. Some classes that Emily teaches have 35 students, According to Emily, teaching 35 students is “quite challenging.” Since the classroom is small, students have little space to work. Her room is filled with tables and cabinets and a Smart Board. The diagram of her classroom can be seen in figure 12.

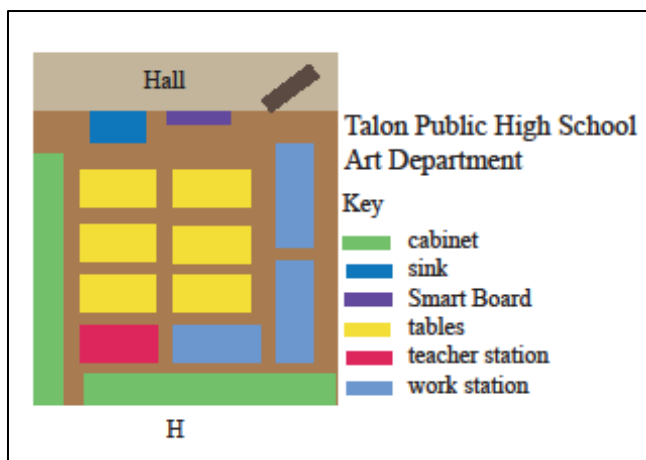


Figure 12. Floor plan for Emily's classroom, Talon Public High School Art Department

Teacher Interactions with Culturally Responsive Teaching

Laura. When asked about the ideal relationship between the teacher and a student, Laura discussed the different actions that she takes to establish trust and credibility with students. In order to establish trust and credibility Laura models the behaviors that she wants the student to exhibit. According to Laura, she does not give students an assignment that she does not do herself. As a result, she makes art with the students. She stated, “What they really enjoy most of all is just seeing me do the assignment with them.” If students are having a bad day, Laura makes certain to talk to them, while still respecting their space. She stated, “They have very small bubbles.” Laura further stated some students “do not like people to get too close.” Laura also mentioned that the rules and classroom procedures apply to her as well. Instead of having coffee in the morning, she drinks water since her students are not allowed to have drinks other than water.

In order to create an atmosphere of positive learning environment, Laura praises her students for the work they accomplish. Laura stated, “Some students may not be the best artists, but they are willing to put all of their efforts into it.” During these times, Laura will say, “Hey, you are doing really well!” In addition, she cares for her students. If a student is having a bad day, she makes herself available if they want to talk. She respects their space. In Laura’s classes, each student is appreciated as an individual.

Laura encourages positive communication with students by talking to them about their work. To do this, she walks around the room asking each individual student if they have questions about the assignment. Since all of her classes are large, Laura has the constant challenge of meeting learning needs of students. To better meet these needs, Laura developed a system that lets her know which students are gifted and talented and which students need learning modification. She assigns different color codes to these groups in her grade. The system is kept confidential and has allowed to her work more efficiently with students. The system has also improved her communication with students because she is more readily able to design lessons

that are specific to the needs of students.

When designing curriculum, Laura begins with the state standards for visual arts curriculum. Then, Laura gives her students a pre-test to determine a student's prior knowledge. Once she knows the levels of students, she works collaboratively with her department to narrow down the specific information that students need to know while taking the class. Laura usually spends a great deal of time helping students understand the elements of art and the principles of design in depth before she teaches composition. She believes that students need to truly know the different parts of art before they can communicate visually.

The lessons that Laura teaches help students understand themselves and each other. One such lesson that she teaches give the students an opportunity to grow as an individual through self-reflection. In this particular lesson, students illustrate a personal narrative. Before constructing the narrative composition, students are required to conduct research. For the research, students take a personality test online. When students take the test they discover their spirit animal. The students work the spirit animal into the picture and work

For instructional purposes, Laura assesses her students in multiple ways. She has students take written tests over the information learned in class. At times, the students write reflections over their works. When students are able to reflect, they are able to make the necessary improvements to their works. Laura also uses different technologies that allow her to administer assessments quickly. The information is immediate letting her know the areas that have to be retaught.

Emily. Emily has a tremendous ability to develop relationships with her students. She claims that there must be “a unique level of trust and understanding” between the teacher and student for an effective relationship. She stressed the importance of this trust in the relationship because when students express themselves in art making, they make themselves feel vulnerable. Emily stated, “To be successful when you're creating art, you have to be open to express yourself and show parts that may or may not be vulnerable.” Emily further stated, “The best way I have

been able to establish good relationships with students is to be fairly non-judgmental with students.” Emily added that a teacher must be open to new ideas and be completely honest when working with students. She believes that honesty and sincerity are qualities that students can spot from a mile away. She added that if teachers are insincere or condescending in anyway, they are going to lose respect from the very beginning. To be effective, teachers must be open with their students.

According to Emily, effective communication happens when teachers and students engage in personal dialogues. Through this dialogue, teachers can determine if students understand material. Teachers must listen to their students and respond without belittling them. As long as they are not personally offensive to anyone, students must be allowed to express themselves. Many of Emily’s students are Hispanic. Often, these students struggle with the correct pronunciation of English. When this occurs, she does not make an issue out of it. Rather, she is more concerned with understanding the students and having them understand her.

In designing curriculum, Emily strongly believes that sequencing is very important in an art class. She claims that students have to build skills before asking them to complete a major task. In order to teach beginning drawing, she presents many “how to” lessons. These lessons allow the students to become comfortable with the mediums before they are asked to handle a more open-ended kind of project. When designing curriculum, she also considers the student’s current level. Once the level has been determined, she designs the lesson to achieve her desired outcomes.

Ideal instruction takes place when students are able to achieve the desired outcomes of the learning. To help the students achieve, teachers must provide students with the resources and information needed to be successful. To teach linear perspective, Emily uses technology to present examples to students. She noted, “We have technology now where you can project all kinds of examples.” In addition, she has the students do a guided drawing, which is a step-by-step approach to drawing. After students have mastered the basic skills, she has the students

complete their own unique drawing. Emily indicated that the teacher is constantly moving around the class to help the students' progress through the drawing. By doing this, she is able to help student make corrections while praising students for jobs well done.

Emily claims that most of the assessments in her in art classes are done through rubrics. According to Emily, rubrics can help determine the success of the project. Emily stated, "Rubrics break it down into different components." These components are criteria that Emily established at the beginning of the assignment. By having the criteria broken down into components, students can focus their attention on improving each of these criteria. For example, the criteria may be to have the students focus on value in drawing. The rubric would then have different components to describe the level of success in the drawing. Emily stated, "These components take a lot of... subjectivity out grading." When students use rubrics, they can more readily determine their areas of strength and weakness.

Teachers' Interactions with Administration

Laura. Laura indicated that she has had great support from administrators throughout the years. According to her, the administrators frequent student art shows. Laura claimed that the administrators enjoy seeing the students display their art at the school and in the surrounding community. In addition, the administration has been quite supportive to teachers on an individual basis. At times, the administration has paid for her to attend the annual Art Education Association convention. In a recent meeting, the assistant principals stressed the importance of art classes. In fact, the administration is looking to hire more art teachers. They use art classes as a way to improve test scores for English language learners.

Emily. Emily has had very supportive administrators. According to Emily, the administration gives good feedback and is able to handle any disciplinary problems without any qualms. Emily added that she also has a fairly good budget for which to buy supplies. She claims that the administration has been very complimentary for the work that she does with students.

Cultural Influences

Aside from their diverse cultural backgrounds, the students at Talon High School have many other cultural influences. Since the school is predominately free and reduced lunch, the students at Talon High School have many challenges associated with poverty. In addition, students are concerned with modern culture that is relative to their lives. Many students have cell phones and communicate through social networks. Because of its relevance to student life, students are concerned with modern culture.

Narrative Portraits of Art Education at Talon

When I entered the school, I saw murals in the office that had been painted by the fine art department. Like Wings, the murals revealed their mascot playing sports and excelling academically. Since the school building is the oldest in the district, Talon did not have a designated visual arts area. Rather the art classes were located in different places all over the building. The lack of proximity eliminated some of the daily face to face communication that takes place at Wings. However, teachers did communicate through other means such as email and in their professional learning communities.

One of the classrooms was extremely small, creating a cramped feeling for teacher and students. The other classroom, however, was quite large. The classroom was comprised of two rooms that had been joined together through one doorway. On one side, was for clay students. The other side was for drawing and other II-dimensional works of art. Like Wings, the classrooms were organized and equipped with art supplies and equipment, including relative technologies.

Outside of each classroom, teachers had a designated area for which to display art works. As I stood there looking at the works, I saw a wide range of abilities that existed with each student. The work at Talon truly reflected the students' interests and backgrounds. One of the teachers had the students draw a spirit animal. In order to do this, students had to research spirit animals from different cultures. The students identified with one of the spirit animals and

incorporated his or her personal interests, dreams, and cultural backgrounds. The display revealed the sense of pride that each one of these student had when completing the works of art.

At the beginning of each class, teachers welcomed students to the classroom in order to create the tone for the class that day. Once class had started, students were in their seats and prepared to begin the lesson. Like Wings, the teachers would engage students in questions that reflected the current themes of each assignment. Again, the questions initiated the necessary scaffolding that students needed to connect new information to existing information. Teachers presented the lesson and demonstrated a skill or technique. Students would then practice the skill or technique and complete an assignment. After the students acquired the skill or technique the teacher gave students a creative problem to solve. In order to solve the problem, students exercised their mastery of the skills and techniques by incorporating personal interests and cultural backgrounds.

Summary

Chapter 4 presents data taken from an investigation of culturally responsive teaching in visual art classes in two selected high schools. The beginning of Chapter Four provides a background of information that is relative to study that consists of a summary of the Oklahoma State standards for visual arts education, Advanced Placement requirements, and detailed information regarding the school district and the two chosen high schools. Data from the investigation also gives a detailed description of the school district initiative and special programs that are relative to visual arts classes. The data reported in Chapter Four assist in explanation for how teachers and administrators interact with culturally responsive teaching. Chapter Five provides an analysis of the visual art departments at both schools. With this analysis, common practices that define culturally responsive teaching are further revealed through the visual arts.

CHAPTER V

ANALYSIS OF DATA

The data collected in this study came from multiple sources, including, observations, interviews, school websites, and different artifacts. The information presented in Chapter four is analyzed in Chapter five. Since the purpose of this study is to examine culturally responsive teaching in the visual arts, Gay's theoretical framework for culturally responsive teaching has been utilized. Culturally responsive teaching uses cultural orientations, previous experiences, and performance styles to design meaningful and effective learning experiences for students (Gay, 2010). According to Gay, culturally responsive teaching consists of four characteristics, which include caring, communication, curriculum, and instruction (Gay, 2010, p. xix). With culturally responsive teaching, these four characteristics are of equal importance.

Manifestations of Culturally Responsive Teaching

Caring

Wings Public High School. Teachers at Wings High School take time to learn about the lives of their students. Through the learning process, teachers develop relationships with students through which effective communication takes place. Teachers model a caring nature by developing curriculum that addresses student need, interests, and experiences. Such modeling aids in the creation of a positive atmosphere in the classroom. The positive environment enables students to feel safe and secure, which is integral to the development of creative thinking.

At times, teachers refer to a student's cultural difference when addressing the needs of students. For example, some cultures do not look a person in the eye as a sign of respect. In order to connect with these and other students, teachers take an open posture. However, teachers find valuing each person's individual uniqueness far more important than any cultural difference. When teachers value each person's individual uniqueness, students can freely express their personal experiences and beliefs through the act of making art. The process creates an open dialogue within the classroom that connects teachers to students and student to students. Simply, everyone has a story to tell and each story is worth being heard. For example, a female student told her story about overcoming an eating disorder and her negative body image through her artwork. The teacher was able to connect with this student on a personal level because she had also struggled with the same disorder and negative feelings.

At the beginning of every semester, the teachers at Wings begin establishing credibility with students. In order to do this, they begin connecting with students through "open" conversations. For example, teachers often show students examples of their own artwork. When teachers show their artwork to students, students can relate to teachers because they know that their teachers are also making art. These conversations allow the teachers to show their "humanity," while simultaneously establishing expectations for their students. Teachers connect with students by sharing a few personal experiences. Such experiences do not go beyond what is appropriate. However, the experiences enable students to connect with teachers on a more personal level. Because teachers are willing to show their human side, students are more willing to trust them. When students trust their teachers, they are more likely to rise to the expectations that have been set.

Teachers demonstrate caring with students at the beginning of each class period. For example, teachers make certain to connect with different students by conversing with students about their artwork, or school or home life. As students come to the room during class changes, teachers greet them at the door. During this time, teachers will make small talk with students.

These talks allow teachers to connect with students. Teachers will ask students about their day or tell students how to prepare for class. Such greetings set the tone for class time while making students feel safe in their surroundings.

Another way that teachers demonstrate caring is through the manner in which teachers connect with students through the instructional times. After teachers present the lesson, they move around the room making certain that students understand the material. For example, the teacher discussed idea sketches with each student. This also allows teachers to check on student progress. In this time, teachers reassure students of their abilities, encourage students, and praise students for jobs well done.

Talon Public High School. In every art class, teachers have a unique way of creating an atmosphere that is calm and peaceful. For example, one teacher played soft relaxing music for students to help students engage in creative thinking. Students thrive in this environment because they do not feel threatened. The positive learning environment is largely due to caring nature found in each of the Talon's art teachers. Since Talon provides students with well-seasoned veteran teachers, teachers have been able to perfect teaching techniques. Because they care about students, they design lessons that fit each person's skill level. Teachers walk with students through the creative process helping all students when needed. Teachers encourage and praise students for their efforts. For example, teachers praise students in written critiques and through verbal conversations.

Teachers also model life-long learning in the classroom. Teachers at Talon are always making art. For example, a teacher was sculpting in clay and one was doing an oil painting. In addition, teachers regularly attend different professional learning venues to learn new techniques that they can present to students.

Communication

Wings Public High School. Teachers understand that communication is integral to the direction and development of an art department that meets the needs of today's student. For

example, teachers in the art department often share students. As a result, they can connect with each other in a way that helps the student's progress. To ensure effective communication, teachers collaborate with each other at weekly meetings, various professional learning venues, and during day-to-day activities. Since teachers have been able to communicate effectively, they have been able to recognize the strengths and weaknesses of the art department. Such information has helped teachers modify curriculum and improve instructional efforts as a way to increase student achievement.

Teachers at Wings communicate with students in a many ways. As students enter the classroom, teachers visit with students. This simple effort allows the teacher to make contact with students as they enter the classroom. When teachers stand at the door and greet students, they establish a presence that reinforces safety and respect for the learning environment.

As a means to initiate effective communication in the classroom, teachers at Wings create an atmosphere of inquiry with students. As students enter the room, teachers have a discussion question placed on the Smart Board that references a particular piece of art. For example, a contemporary non-objective sculpture was presented to students for discussion. The teacher and students discussed the elements of art and the principles of design that were evidenced in the art piece.

Students answer the question by analyzing the art piece. Questions have been developed through the professional learning community and are geared to focus student learning to the current concepts within the current teaching unit. Once teachers take roll, they engage students in discussion. During the process, the teachers are able to connect with students, while ascertaining that students understand the concepts presented.

Another way that Wings teachers effectively communicate with students is that they make themselves accessible to students. For example, they meet with students outside of class. Students may seek additional help with teachers before and after school and sometimes during lunch. Because three of four art rooms are located in close proximity to each other, the teachers

are able to provide additional support to students. The close proximity allows teachers to collaborate with each other when working with students. Such interaction among teachers and students increases the unity that one feels inside the art department.

The Art Club at Wings is an extra-curricular program that provides teachers with another means to interact closely with students. Each teacher works closely with art club to strengthen unity in the department and to promote the arts within the school. During club events, teachers can strengthen their communication with students outside of the classroom. At the annual pumpkin carving party, teachers work closely with students. These events provide a relaxed environment at which students do not have to worry about an assignment; they can just come and socialize with other art students. Art club events facilitate communication among students and teachers.

Talon Public High School. Teachers at Talon communicate with each other at weekly meetings. In these meetings, teachers collaborate on curriculum and how to improve student academic achievement. Through this collaborative effort, teachers have been able to determine what students need to know and what needs to be taught. Such information has been valuable in developing an art department that addresses the needs of diverse students.

As a way to effectively communicate with students, teachers provide students with a syllabus that outlines the semester. The syllabus also lay out the curriculum for the year as well as the classroom expectations. Teachers also provide students with clear and concise learning goals and objectives. These can be seen on a central wall located in each classroom.

In order to create an atmosphere of communication, teachers learn about the cultural backgrounds and interests of students. For example, teachers converse with students to learn about their interests. With this knowledge, teachers are able to develop curriculum that motivates students to take an active role in learning. Such curriculum provides both teachers and students with another avenue of communication. In many cases, teachers give students a creative problem to solve. Students solve the problem by attaching personal elements to the art. Once students

have completed the assignment, teachers engage students in group critiques where students present their art and discuss its meaning. For example, a student discussed the meaning of his art piece during critique. This communicative opportunity fosters respect for diversity among students and teacher.

Like Wings, teachers at Talon engage students in Art Club. The school club provides another avenue for teachers to connect with students outside of the classroom. The club brings guest artists to the building, college representatives, engages in group art shows throughout the school year.

Curriculum

Wings Public High School. Teachers work together in their professional learning community to develop curriculum that fits the specific needs of Wings art students. First and foremost, teachers follow the state standards for secondary arts education when developing curriculum. In their professional learning community, teachers engage in curriculum mapping at the beginning of each year. With mapping teachers formulate a timeline of events to pinpoint the specific curriculum that is to be taught during each part of the year. In addition, teachers must set goals for themselves and strategize how to meet these goals to stay in sync with the timeline.

When presenting lessons, teachers use scaffolding to build upon previous knowledge. For example, when teachers teach linear perspective, they have students photograph familiar buildings to draw. The familiarity of the buildings helps students connect new knowledge to existing knowledge. As students move through the arts program, they continue to gain more skills for techniques, as they develop their ability to think creatively. When teachers present new concepts, they provide students with a framework to connect new information to existing knowledge.

At the beginning of each class, teachers show a selected art work that represents the concepts that students are learning about in the current unit. These selected works come from a diverse group of artists and are presented to students in the classroom for discussion. By

presenting different artists in this way, teachers are able to integrate culture to all parts of the art curriculum.

The curriculum at Wings directs student learning in two ways, teacher centered and student centered. In beginner art classes, classes are teacher-centered. For example, in the beginning art classes, teachers teach basic drawing techniques to establish a foundation in art. When a foundation has been established, the curriculum becomes more student-centered. In the advanced classes, classrooms are more student centered and teacher directed. For example, a teacher gave a topic to students in the form of a visual problem. Students had to research the topic to provide a visual solution. In the beginning classes, teachers tell students what to draw; whereas, the advanced students are developing their own visual voice. In the advanced classes, students build upon their existing knowledge by solving open-ended creative problems. Students solve problems through the exploration of different topics and the experimentation of different art mediums. In addition, students must make personal experiences an integral part of the artwork.

Because teachers are able to communicate effectively with students, they know student interests. Such knowledge allows teachers to develop curriculum that motivates student learning. Culture also influences the curriculum choices of teachers. Works from artists of many ethnic backgrounds are presented so that students can be exposed to a variety of cultures. For example, the work from artist Diego Rivera provides a window into the history and culture of the Mexican people. Teachers will also use the application of certain cultures in some of their units. However, teachers find much more success with students by providing students with open-ended creative problems to solve. To solve these problems, students must bring into account their own experience. The goal, of course, is to support each person's unique individuality. During group discussions, students grow in understanding of themselves and each other.

Talon Public High School. Teachers design curriculum in a collaborative effort that takes place inside the Professional Learning Communities. During community meetings, teachers determine “what needs to be taught” and “what students need to know.” For example, the

teachers use the standards for arts education to determine what needs to be taught. Then, they collaborate and develop curriculum that infuses culture that is relative to their student body. Together they develop lessons that incorporate both culture and the standards for art education. In addition, teachers engage in curriculum mapping where they establish a yearly timeline for teaching specific art concepts, skills, and techniques. The structure assists teachers in designing curriculum that fits the needs of a diverse body of students.

As a means to improve curriculum, teachers at Talon collaborate with each other to provide students a culturally enriched curriculum. In order to do this, they develop units. These units consist of teaching students the foundation principles needed to compose art works. For example, when teachers teach drawing, they teach a unit solely on contour drawing. Once the foundation has been established, students are given open-ended creative problems to solve. Students solve creative problems by using the learned principles and by incorporating personal background and experiences.

Instruction

Wings Public High School. To provide effective instruction for all students, lessons are designed to appeal to auditory, visual, and tactile learners. For example, for the visual learners, teachers provide many visual examples detailing the type of art that students will make. Students listen to instruction, look at examples, and engage in hands on activities. Teachers also make appropriate learning accommodations for students when needed. For example, for Hispanic students with limited English speaking skills, lessons are often translated into Spanish. Teachers can also increase the difficulty of the creative problems for those gifted students who need more challenging material. For those struggling students, teachers may simplify material in order to make students successful. In every case, teachers address the diverse learning needs of students in ways that help them be successful.

All teachers use technology in classroom instruction. Classes, such as graphic design and Advanced Placement studio art, require more technology usage in everyday practice. In the beginner classes, however, students are experimenting with more traditional art mediums.

At the beginning of each assignment, teachers establish the learning goals and objectives with students. For example, a goal established in the three dimensional design course was to create a sculpture that exemplified the elements of line, and the design principles of rhythm, and repetition. Goals and objectives are posted on walls for students to refer to when creating works of art. As students create the works, they focus their attention to meeting these goals and objectives.

In order to respond to the learning needs of students, teachers at Wings assess strategies to help students learn effectively. For example, teachers quiz students over vocabulary words through simple multiple-choice questions. Because quizzes provide teachers with a quick assessment of student understanding, teachers can more readily pinpoint problematic areas within the instruction. Quizzes help teachers recognize the areas that need to be retaught. They can reteach these areas and increase the academic success of all students. When student finish their works, they self- assess with a rubric that is specifically designed for each unit. Rubrics remove much of the subjectivity when evaluating art works. In addition, such assessments aid students in self-evaluating. Self-evaluation helps students take ownership in their learning. With rubrics, students must determine strengths and weaknesses and make improvements to work wherever necessary. As part of the self-evaluation, students write reflections indicating how they have met the requirements of the lesson. Students also set future learning goals for these lessons.

Aside from rubrics, teachers initiate student assessments through portfolio development. In the lower classes, students learn basic skills and methods of communicating visually. As students move into the Advanced Placement classes, they develop portfolios aligned to the requirements of the College Board.

Talon Public High School. Teachers have methods that help them quickly identify students on an Individualized Education Plan and those students who are deemed as Gifted and Talented. Such information is helpful when addressing a classroom that has thirty plus students. With this information, teachers can effectively provide differentiated instruction in an effort to improve academic success for all students. For example, one teacher color-codes her grade book. Gifted and talented have a specific color. Usually, teachers present lessons with three different levels, which are low, middle, and high. Lessons are presented on the middle level. If students need a greater challenge, teachers move students to the higher level. Those students needing greater assistance solve problems of a lower level of difficulty.

Another way that teachers provide differentiated instruction is by designing instruction to fit all learning styles. For example, teachers design instruction to fit visual, auditory, and tactile learners. When teachers lecture they provide students with visual examples to further explain concepts. As part of these presentations, teachers demonstrate art techniques and processes. After students receive instruction, they practice these techniques and processes through the act of making art. Visual learners can see the examples. Auditory learners can listen to the lectures for instruction. The tactile learners can learn from engaging in the art making process.

Teachers assess student learning in multiple ways. For example, they quiz students, provide students with oral and written critiques, use rubrics and use art portfolios. In order to check comprehension of art terms and concepts, teachers give students simple multiple choice and true false quizzes. Quizzes are administered to students through use of both integrated technology and traditional paper forms. Teachers also design rubrics for students. Students evaluate themselves according to rubrics. The rubrics help students determine strengths and weaknesses in work. Beginning and intermediate classes prepare students to take Advanced Placement classes where students develop portfolios that are college ready. Portfolios reveal a student's growth and development.

Comparing and Contrasting Wings and Talon in Terms of Culturally Responsive Teaching

Caring. At both schools, teachers seem to care about the students they serve. Teachers have special ways in which they care for students. Such ways are born out of each teacher's personality, history, and experience and are not unique to each school. Both schools have a protocol for structuring an environment where caring relationships between the teacher and student can be nurtured and developed. For example, at Wings, a student felt comfortable to discuss her recovery from an eating disorder with a teacher. At Talon, a student felt free to discuss his future educational plans with a teacher.

At both schools, teachers attend professional learning communities to develop stimulating lessons for art students. Teachers also attend different professional development venues during different times of the year. Teachers at both schools are committed to lifelong learning. As a result, they are always searching for new and exciting methods to impact student learning.

Teachers ability to care for students can be witnessed in a myriad of ways within these schools. To begin, teachers create a peaceful and nurturing atmosphere within the classroom by providing students with boundaries. Boundaries ensure that students understand what is expected of them. According to teachers, healthy boundaries are crucial to creating safe atmospheres that point to the creative development of students. With these boundaries, trust can be established and affirmed. Students feel safe and can excel when they know what is expected of them. Boundaries give teachers the ability to establish and affirm trust when working with students. According to teachers, trust is essential to establishing credibility with students. When students are able to trust their teachers, relationships are formed, which is essential to the creative development of students.

In addition, teachers praise students for jobs well done as well as recognize each student's individual uniqueness. Teachers at both schools claimed that culture is important when

working with students. However, recognizing a students' individuality is of far greater significance. As a result, teachers design lessons that promote the individual uniqueness of each student.

The teachers at Wings are effective when working with students. However, they are new to the profession and are still learning how to best care for students. Since they are new to the profession, they have had to work harder to establish credibility. The veteran teachers at Talon on the other hand have an advantage over Wings teachers because they have experience working with students and therefore have credibility. When students at Talon are new to the art department, he or she can trust teachers quickly because teachers already have an established reputation for caring for their students. The teachers at Wings are still establishing a presence in the school. As a result, they spend more time developing relationships with students in extracurricular activities associated with the school.

Communication. According to teachers at Wings and Talon, effective teaching occurs through the teacher and student relationship. As a result, teachers work to develop relationships with their students by establishing trust. Teachers claim that trust is crucial to the creative development of students. With effective communication, teachers can more readily meet the learning of students. For one, teachers discover the likes and interests of students. Such information helps teachers develop curriculum that is student centered and full of student experiences.

The teachers at Wings and Talon communicate effectively with each other through the professional learning communities. Such communities help teachers plan and organize curriculum in a way that promote continuity within the departments. Teachers take a topic such as the elements and principles of design and develop curriculum that focuses lessons on these themes. Communities also help teachers assess student achievement by examining qualitative and quantitative data.

A major difference between the two schools evaluated in this study is that three of the four classrooms at Wings are located in close proximity. Whereas, the classrooms at Talon are so spread out that teachers may not see each other on an everyday basis. Since the classrooms are located close together at Wings, teachers have more time to develop relationships. These relationships provide teachers with the needed support to be effective when addressing student achievement.

As the Hispanic population continues to grow at both schools, the ability to communicate effectively with students remains an ongoing challenge for teachers. The administration in these schools works closely with art teachers to ensure that students have the appropriate resources needed to be more successful. Since visual art classes promote largely hands-on activities, such as drawing and sculpting, the administration at both schools uses the fine arts classes to improve the English speaking ability of students. The manner in which each school handles the influx of the Hispanic population is quite different. For one, Wings has a teacher who is adeptly bilingual. Due to this fact, the administration places many students with very limited or no English speaking skills in her class. Talon on the other hand, does not have a bilingual teacher. As a result, teachers must rely on those students who have both Spanish and English speaking skills to help translate information for those students who lack the ability to understand.

Maria, a bilingual art teacher at Wings, claimed that students do the work if they understand the material. As a result, she speaks to students in Spanish, and her assignments are translated. Maria also claimed that her classes are split because of her students' inability to communicate through language, which is somewhat counter to culturally responsive teaching. Since culturally responsive teaching is supposed to increase unity within the classroom, providing students with two different languages is somewhat counter to culturally responsive teaching. The challenge in this case is to create more unity within the classroom.

Another similarity between the schools is that the art teachers at both schools facilitate art club. The clubs in these schools provides another way for teachers to communicate with

students. At club events, teachers can develop relationships with students and promote the art department.

Curriculum. To provide students with stimulating curriculum that meets the needs of students, teachers at both schools engage in professional learning communities. In these communities, teachers assess the strengths and weaknesses found in curriculum. To develop curriculum, teachers work together in a collaborative process to establish learning goals and strategies to reach these goals throughout the year. In order to carry out these strategies, teachers engage in curriculum mapping. Such mapping provides timeline for presenting different sections of the curriculum in the year. By following the timeline, teachers can more readily stay on task and help students achieve desired learning goals.

Teachers at Talon are striving to incorporate more cultural and historical contexts into art classes. The approach is quite similar to Wing's in that classrooms are both teacher and student directed. In order to help students learn material, teachers demonstrate a technique. By presenting the lesson in this way, students quickly learn and acquire the desired skills. When students achieve a certain level of competency in a medium, the class becomes more student-directed. In this case, the teachers initiate student learning by giving students a creative problem to solve. When students are presented with choices, they take ownership in their learning.

Instruction. The instructional goals at both schools are very similar. For example, both schools wish to increase the number of students taking and passing the Advanced Placement Studio Art examination. The difference, however, lies in the fact that Wings chooses to increase test scores by 85% and Talon chooses to increase scores by 80%. The strategies to achieve this goal are also quite similar. The teachers at both schools quiz students to assess current knowledge as well as test students' accumulated knowledge for midterm and semester tests. Testing helps teachers determine the effectiveness of lessons. Such assessments allow teachers to quickly modify instruction to fit the specific needs of each student.

The teachers at both schools provide students with differentiated instruction in the form of auditory, visual, and tactile learning. In order to provide such instruction, teachers lecture students about art concepts, show examples of art, and demonstrate ways of working with various mediums. In order to engage in practice, teachers engage students in hands-on learning to explore and practice different art mediums and ways of working.

Teachers at both schools integrate technology into everyday classroom practice. Students at each school have access to a computer whether it is in the room or a computer room within the building. For some assignments, teacher may have students access the computers or use digital imagery in order to develop creative concepts for art making. Some classes, however, utilize technology more than others to stimulate student learning and creative growth. Classes, such as pottery or beginning and intermediate art classes, focus largely on traditional art techniques and methods rather than in depth technological study and practice. However, classes such as Studio Art direct students to use more technology as common everyday practice.

There are subtle differences between the two schools. For one, Wings offers students a graphic communications class where students learn common design programs, such as Illustrator, InDesign, and Photoshop. This class helps prepare students for a creative career in graphic design. Talon does not provide students with a graphic design class. However, the teachers utilize technology throughout general instruction. After teaching certain art concepts and vocabulary, teachers will use technology in the form of Clickers to ensure that students are grasping the information. Table 5 provides the differences and similarities between Wings and Talon Public High Schools.

Table 5

Similarities and Differences Between Wings Public High School and Talon Public High School

CR Characteristics	Wings	Talon	Comments
Caring	Teachers new to education are adapting to how to best care for students.	Veteran teachers care for students.	Teachers structure the classroom where caring teacher and student relationships are nurtured.
Communication	The close proximity of classrooms makes communication easy for teachers.	Art classes are scattered across the building.	<p>Teachers communicate with each other by face, through email, and through professional learning communities.</p> <p>Teachers build trusting relationships with students in and out of the classroom</p> <p>Teachers engage students in art club.</p>
Curriculum	Offers a graphic design class.	Increasing cultural content to curriculum.	<p>Teachers develop curriculum in professional learning communities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supports students' individuality. • Supports English language learners. <p>Teachers give students an open-ended creative problem to solve.</p>
Instruction	Improve test scores to 85%. Provides a graphic design class.	Improve test scores by 80%. Use technology for assessment.	<p>Teachers provide differentiated instruction.</p> <p>Teachers integrate technology.</p>

Summary

Chapter Five provides the analyzed data from the interviews, observations, and artifacts that have been used in Chapter IV. Data are analyzed through the lens of culturally responsive teaching (Gay, 2010) as developed by Dr. Geneva Gay. The characteristics of culturally responsive teaching include: caring, communication, curriculum, and instruction. Chapter Five brings to light the manifestations of culturally responsive teaching in two different high school visual art programs within the same district. Manifestations reveal how teachers demonstrate these characteristics in daily teaching. Chapter Six reveals the recommendations for effective culturally responsive teaching as it relates to culturally responsive teaching.

CHAPTER VI

FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

High school visual arts teachers and school administrators within the same district provided a richly detailed description of culturally responsive teaching as it relates to visual arts education for this study. The study revealed how visual arts teachers use culturally responsive teaching to design meaningful and effective learning experiences for diverse learners (Banks, 2004; Gay, 2013). In order to conduct the study, permission was granted from an Oklahoma school district and two different high school visual arts programs within that district were evaluated. The information in Chapter VI provides conclusions, implications, and recommendations for state leaders, school administrators, and visual art teachers relative to culturally responsive teaching in visual arts education.

The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine culturally responsive teaching in art education in selected high schools. The following research questions guided the study:

1. How do art teachers carry out culturally responsive teaching?
2. How is culturally responsive teaching in the art classroom supported by the administration?
3. What other findings are pertinent to culturally responsive teaching?

The research questions below are based on the case studies presented in Chapter IV and the data reported in Chapter V.

Research Question One: How do art teachers carry out culturally responsive teaching?

Culturally responsive teaching allows students to be aware of cultures outside of their own experiences and addresses the varied needs of diverse students. Visual arts teachers at these two schools carry out culturally responsive teaching in a variety of ways, as outlined in the following paragraphs.

Professional Development. Teachers at each school stay abreast of current trends in education because they regularly attend different professional development venues. Teachers at both schools have received advanced placement training and are able to present students with challenging curriculum that advances a student's abilities to think creatively. The professional development also equips them with the ability to respond to the needs of diverse learners.

Teachers at each school engage in professional learning communities. In these communities, teachers engage in collaborative efforts to address the needs of each individual student. Through these professional learning communities, teachers plan curriculum that fits the specific needs of each student. Within each professional learning community, the teachers set goals and design strategies to meet these goals.

Classroom Design. Teachers design their classroom to be both teacher and student driven. When a teacher presents a new concept or skill, the classroom is more teacher-driven. This practice allows the student to learn the necessary skills to complete the work. When the student learns the skill, the teacher adjusts the classroom to be more student-centered. The teacher does this by asking students a question or by providing students with a creative problem to solve. When a teacher gives an assignment to students, he or she will establish a set of criteria students are to follow when creating the piece of art. For example, one such assignment was to have the students complete a spirit drawing where students selected an animal that best described their personality. Along with the spirit animal, students drew specific symbols to represent elements of the students' cultural backgrounds along with their hopes and dreams for the future.

In order to complete this work successfully, students had to apply the appropriate elements and principles of art and design.

Classroom protocol. Teachers greet students at the door, welcoming students into the classroom. This small gesture affects the overall tone of the classroom. When teachers greet their students, they create caring and safe environment for learners before they even enter the classroom. In addition to the initial greeting, teachers have other ways to make students feel safe and secure within the classroom. One-way is the manner in which teachers provides instruction to students. Each teacher has an outlined structure for class time that enables teachers to present new information, allows students to practice, and enables students time to review information.

Differentiated Instruction. Every teacher utilizes differentiated instruction as a method to address the varied learning needs of students. Classes provide students with opportunities to engage in visual, auditory, and tactile learning activities. Lessons are usually designed to fit beginning, intermediate, and advanced students. In this way, teachers are readily able to adjust teaching to fit the specific needs of students.

Scaffolding. Teachers use scaffolding to connect existing knowledge to new information. Teachers use the students' cultural backgrounds to connect existing knowledge to new information. In addition, teachers streamline their instruction to build upon existing knowledge. As student progress through the visual programs at each school, students are increasingly more challenged. Students are able to meet these challenges because they are able to connect new knowledge to their existing knowledge for art theory and practice.

Assessment. Teachers at both schools provide students with different forms of assessments. Students take simple tests in the form of multiple-choice and true /false questions covering valuable art terminology. Other times, students may be asked to compose a written response that addresses particular art concepts that have been addressed in class. After presenting the material to students, teachers test students to check comprehension. Teachers work

collaboratively in their professional learning communities by developing questions that are appropriate to each class and grade level.

Besides written tests, the teachers at both schools use the practice of portfolios. In each class, students complete a number of works of art over the course of a semester. These works reveal the student's growth and provide direction for future development. Teachers also utilize rubrics as a method to help students expand their artistic abilities. According to teachers, rubrics help students understand weaknesses and strengths while helping students to take ownership in learning.

Art Shows and Events. The teachers at both schools engage students in art shows and art events throughout the year. Students in art enter their works in the Young Talent competition, the state scholarship competition that showcases student art talent. Both schools also engage in other art competitions throughout the school year. Each school has designated areas within the school to showcase student talent. Teachers also engage students in the fine arts fair during the spring semester.

Art Club. Because the art club is an extra-curricular activity that supports the visual arts programs at each public high school, the teachers use the art clubs to build art programs. The club provides students with an additional means for teachers to connect and build relationships with the students at each school. The art club provides students with a means to socialize in a safe environment through parties and volunteer activities. Students that are part of art club are also exposed to different collegiate programs and job opportunities that are associated with the visual arts.

Funding. Advanced Placement teachers can receive grant funding from the state of Oklahoma for AP classes. Grants can be received for each of the AP tests in the visual arts. These tests include: art history, I-dimensional design, III-dimensional design, and drawing classes. Grants provide funding for equipment such as potter's wheels, cameras, books and other materials associated with AP classes. AP grants also provide funding for teaching training.

The Oklahoma City Museum of Art and the Oklahoma Arts Council provide additional grant funding for visual arts education. Teachers may also look to other business, district education, and other organizations that provide for the visual arts in education.

Research Question 2: How is culturally responsive teaching in the art classroom supported by the administration?

Culturally responsive teaching is supported at both schools by district and school administration. The following provides examples of administrative support.

Organizational Structure. The overall management structure for the school district is designed to support teachers. Since the district values the importance of fine arts education, they have a designated fine arts director to be over all of the fine arts in the district. The director disseminates information and funding to each of the fine arts teachers in the school district. The fine arts director serves as a liaison between the school administrators and the fine arts teachers. Aside from the fine arts director, each school has a department chair that leads teachers in the development of visual arts curriculum that supports core curriculum.

Professional Development. Culturally responsive teaching in the art classroom is supported by the administration at both schools. In order to support teachers, the school district ensures that teachers stay abreast of current trends in education. Yearly, teachers attend different professional development meetings. In the last year, teachers at both schools attended AP training for visual art. In addition, the school district implemented professional learning communities for teachers within each of the schools. The teachers within each department meet together once a week to plan and develop programs that are specifically tailored to the needs of each student. This year the district administration had each community within the school set goals and establish strategies for reaching these goals.

Curriculum. Because the school system is quite diverse, the school faces the challenge of serving those students with limited English speaking skills. The administration at both schools uses the visual arts classes to provide students with an atmosphere where students can build upon

their English speaking skills. At one particular school, there is a teacher in the art department who is bilingual. In addition, the district is looking to hire more visual arts teachers to provide students with more chances to improve on speaking skills.

Funding. The administration at both schools works to provide teachers with appropriate funding to run each art department. Many times the administration has set aside special funding that allows teachers the ability to purchase art supplies. In addition, district bond elections also provide funding for visual art programs.

Research Question 3: What other findings are pertinent to culturally responsive teaching?

Teachers find that addressing culture when providing students with an enriched art experience to be beneficial. However, one cannot understand the individual without understanding the culture. This is an important aspect of teachers “using” culture. To be culturally responsive, one must understand culture—one could argue that through teaching culture, one comes to better understand culture, especially if there is “cultural” interaction. More importantly, teachers stressed the importance of recognizing each student's individual worth. Throughout the curriculum, the teachers use culture. However, the curriculum is designed to help students arrive at their own conclusions.

Other findings pertinent to culturally responsive teaching center on different types of technologies that teachers use in classrooms. In some of the art classes, teachers use the different graphic programs, which prepare students for the work force or further collegiate study in the visual arts. In other cases, teachers use technology to communicate with students inside and outside of the classroom.

Conclusions

Teachers at both schools understand that culture plays a major role in addressing the varied needs of students. Through their understanding of culture, teachers were able to focus on each student's individual worth. Culturally responsive teaching provided teachers with a systematic process to address the varied needs of all students. In both schools, teachers presented

instructional material that addressed different learning styles. In the classes, students regularly used technology to research, create art, and for assessment strategies. Classrooms were both teacher centered and student centered. For example, at the beginning of units, classes would be teacher centered which allowed the teachers to teach basic art concepts and skills. As the students progressed and acquired these skills and concepts, classrooms became student centered where the teachers directed student learning.

In both schools, teachers worked to help students achieve, excel, and take responsibility for their learning. For example, students were presented with choices. The teachers helped students navigate these choices through the many accomplishments that students' experience.

Administration provided support for their teaching strategies. Teachers expressed that they feel respected in their chosen profession and can excel in the ability to serve all students. The classes under study supported diverse education and were used to help English language learners develop language speaking skills.

Implications

Findings from this study have implications for research, theory, and practice.

Implications for Research

Culturally responsive teaching is a systematic method for teachers to follow when addressing the needs of diverse learners. Research indicates that culturally responsive teachers design their classroom environments to be culturally sensitive through the development of relationships and effective instructional strategies (Gay, 2013; Moore and Hansen, 2012). Because the arts make learning meaningful and motivate students to learn, the arts can be an effective means to help meet the learning needs of diverse learners (National visual arts standards, 2014; Rollins, 1994).

Research indicates that many pre-service teachers feel unprepared in dealing with the diverse needs of learners when entering the teaching profession (Lee, 2013). The study gives

insight into the practices of high school visual arts teachers teaching in diverse student bodies. The information gained from this study can be helpful to those entering the teaching profession and to those who are currently working in it. In addition, school leaders can gain useful information in how to support visual arts departments.

Since the study focused attention to visual arts classes in large urban high schools, this exact study could be applied to smaller schools in rural communities. In addition, this study could extend to teachers who instruct in the earlier grade levels. Such studies would reveal how teachers in these communities provide culturally responsive teaching in visual art classes and how the administration in these schools supports these efforts. For the reason that the teachers were female and the administrators were male in this study, a study could be done to determine how gender plays a role in providing culturally responsive teaching.

Different types of methodologies could be used in this study. One type of methodology that can be used for a study is phenomenology. These studies provide a rich description that explains how people experience a phenomenon (MAS, 2011). Such a study could show how students respond to culturally responsive teaching. Another type of methodology that can be used for a study is grounded theory. This theory is used to explain the “how’s” and “why’s” of a phenomenon (MAS, 2011). Experimental design studies could also be used to test the difference between culturally responsive teaching and other strategies.

Implications for Theory

Because the study examined culturally responsive teaching in visual arts classes, the study contributed to constructivist theory as the epistemological method for constructing knowledge (Applefield, 2000; Bruner 2004). The study focused on teachers and the methods in which they respond to diversity in visual arts classes. The study showed how existing knowledge provides the foundation for understanding and receiving new information (Takaya, 2008; Bruner,

2008). The study also revealed how culture impacts these interpretations (Applefield, 2000; Bruner, 2008).

Culturally responsive teaching is important in educational practice because it recognizes each child's unique individual worth. Such educational practice is imperative to those teachers working in culturally diverse environments. For those teachers that do not experience high diversity, multicultural education can be effective because in these schools students are exposed to different cultures outside of their own environments.

Implications for Practice.

This study had implications for state leaders, school administration, and high school visual art teachers. Examples of implications for these various stakeholders can be seen in the following paragraphs.

State Leaders. Unfortunately, school spending continues to be reduced within the state of Oklahoma. According to news sources, \$47 million was eliminated from Oklahoma Schools during the 2015-2016, school year school (Harris, 2016). Sources also indicate that the current financial crisis is the worst one in several decades (Harris, 2016). Such cuts place strong limitations on a school's ability to provide the necessary programs that enrich a child's educational development. In many districts, fine arts funding has been largely reduced or eliminated because of these cuts. Since the removal of the fine art furthers the marginalization of diverse students, state leaders must secure educational funding for schools to operate fine arts programs.

School Administration. The school administration can support teachers in diverse environments by ensuring that teachers receive professional development that is pertinent to the needs of the teachers and students. School administrators must secure and allocate fine arts funding in order to operate fine arts programs. The school administration must ensure that the visual arts student receive recognition for their efforts.

Visual Arts Teachers. Visual art teachers in culturally diverse schools should provide direct student learning in two ways. Classroom should be both teacher directed and student directed. When teaching a new concept or skill, the classroom should be teacher directed. When students understand the concepts and have acquired the skills, teacher can present students with an open-ended creative problem to solve. To solve these problems, students practice the new concepts and skills while incorporating elements of their background and cultures.

Summary

Chapter I provided the problem statement and the purpose of this study. Eagle Public Schools located in a large urban area faces many different challenges associated with a diverse student body. In this district, the visual arts department plays a major role in addressing the various needs of diverse students. Chapter II reviewed the literature associated with culturally responsive teaching and visual arts education. Culturally responsive teaching provides a systematic approach to providing students all with quality education (Rychly, 2012). Chapter III describes the qualitative case study methods that were used in this study. Two high schools within the same district that serve a diverse student body were chosen for this study. The study examined the teaching practices of visual art teachers in each school. The data collected came from personal interviews, observations, and document reviews. I conducted interviews with three administrators and six teachers. Two teachers came from one site and four came from the other site. Two district administrators who oversee special programs within the district were selected to participate. One administrator came from each of the Eagle Crest Schools. Data came from the school website, classroom syllabi, and teacher lesson plans. Data was analyzed using the system of triangulation. Culturally responsive teaching was the lens used to analyze data.

The epistemological approach to knowledge acquisition was constructivism. The construction of knowledge in this study came by examining culturally responsive teaching in two different public high schools within the same district. The case studies taken from administrators and teachers in these schools are presented in Chapter IV. Case studies provided a vivid

description of culturally responsive teaching in visual arts classes. The studies also revealed the interactions that take place as a result of culturally responsive teaching as relative to the visual art classes. Chapter V provides an analysis of data through the lens of culturally responsive teaching. The findings in this study confirmed that culturally responsive teaching is an effective method for teachers to create culturally sensitive learning environments, develop positive relationships, and design learning strategies that motivate students in the learning process (Moore & Hanson, 2012). The findings reinforced the arts as being a powerful means for reaching, motivating, and teaching all students (National visual arts standards, 2014; Rollins, 1994).

Researcher Comments

Because the school district values the benefits that can be achieved through the visual arts, the administration in the district works to support the arts in the schools. I became very interested in the manner in which the school district organizes and supports its art teachers. For one, this school district has a fine arts director who oversees the visual and performing arts for the district. His purpose is to disseminate information and money to the visual art teachers. He serves as a strong advocate for the arts in this district.

As an observer, I became interested in how curriculum was developed and presented in both schools. Teachers attend professional learning communities where they collaborate on curriculum ideas throughout the year. For the most part, the teachers work within their school to develop curriculum that is suitable to their particular student needs. Because the teachers teach different subjects, the curriculum is structured in topics. For example, the teachers develop curriculum that supports the elements and principles of design while bringing in different aspects of culture. When a teacher presents students with a new concept or skill, the classroom is teacher driven. After students understand the concepts and have mastered the skills, the classroom becomes student directed. When students understand the concepts and have mastered the skills, the teacher gives students open-ended, creative problems to solve. In order to solve the creative

problem, students must use the skills and concepts, while they incorporate aspects of their own personal experiences and cultural backgrounds.

In this study, I saw how teachers create a positive and safe atmosphere for all students. Teachers in these diverse environments create safe atmospheres by greeting students at the door, having clear goals and expectations for their learning, and by having a defined structure for the manner in which students are instructed. In these environments, teachers establish relationships with students in which effective communication takes place. Such atmospheres are necessary for students to grow, take risks, and experience creative learning.

I approached the study as a student because I wanted to learn from those teachers who are successfully delivering culturally responsive teaching in schools that are similar to where I teach. The administrators and teachers that participated in the study were instrumental in helping shed light on culturally responsive teaching.

From the study, I gained greater insight into the lives of different types of people. The study helped me understand students on a much deeper level. I know that providing each student with equitable educational opportunities is pertinent to each child's educational experience. I also know that culture can be used effectively when reaching students from different ethnic backgrounds. The difficulty for me, as a teacher, is that certain belief systems provide a negative environment for students and are counterproductive to a child's educational development. The study showed me that rather than stressing importance of culture in my teaching, I need to be more concerned with recognizing each child's individual worth.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Trustworthiness Table

<i>Technique</i>	<i>Examples of Activities</i>	<i>Results</i>
Referential adequacy	Interviews, observations, documents, writing assignments, and photos	Methodology: data collection
Peer Debriefing	Engaged in informal and formal discussions with peers regarding research design, problem statement, interview process, and data analysis. Received feedback on writing and found direction in considering various explanations.	Methodology: descriptive data collection and analysis, conclusions, and implications
Member Checking	Participants received transcripts and coded data in order to check information accuracy and to provide any additional information that is relevant to the study.	Methodology: data collection and analysis
Thick Description	The profile of two large suburban public high school; participants; education experience	Organized data for presentation
Purposive sampling	Six secondary visual art teachers Three administrators	Methodology: participants
Triangulation	Data were recorded, grouped, and analyzed	Verify data
Audit Trail	Documents including transcripts from interviews, interview and observation notes, data cards (3X5), photographs, assignments, syllabus, program grant	Methodology

APPENDIX B

Script for Soliciting Volunteers for Participation

Putnam City North High School
11800 N Rockwell Ave
Oklahoma City, OK 73162
(405) 722-4220

Putnam City West High School
8500 NW 23rd St
Oklahoma City, OK 73127
(405) 787-1140

Dear Participants,

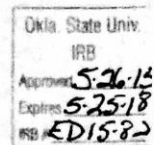
My name is Kevin Thomas. I am conducting research for my doctoral dissertation. My topic is culturally responsive teaching in art education. Because of your expertise and experience for serving the arts in these environments, you and your school have been chosen for the study. The process of collecting data will consist of interviews, observations, and the receiving of documentation such as syllabi and lesson plans.

As you know, teaching in a culturally diverse environment can be quite challenging. Like you, I spend much time researching and preparing lessons that meet the varied and diverse needs of my students. I am interested in learning about what makes your art department successful. I have been given permission from Jason Memoli to request your input on a completely voluntary basis.

In this process, I will ensure effective communication with all parties involved via cell phone and email. The data that you provide will help advance the field of art education in public education. Thank you for participating in this effort.

Sincerely,

Kevin Thomas, M.F.A.
1901 West 15th Street
Edmond, OK 73013



APPENDIX C

FOLLOW UP EMAIL TO FACULTY AND STAFF

SCRIPT FOR SOLICITING VOLUNTEERS FOR PARTICIPATION

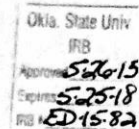
Follow-Up Email to Faculty and Staff in Selected Case Study Schools

My name is Kevin Thomas. As I stated in a former email, I am conducting research for my doctoral dissertation. The topic that I have chosen is culturally responsive teaching in art education. Based on your school's diverse cultural background and your expertise in the area of arts education and serving students, you have been selected to participate in my research. I will be conducting a case study analysis of visual art education of your school and district.

To conduct the research, I will need to interview you, receive documentation regarding your visual program, and be able to observe you working with students. I appreciate your willingness to share your knowledge in this area that can be quite challenging too many teachers. The information that you provide will provide great insight to other art teachers serving in culturally diverse environments.

If you have any questions, you may contact me via reply email.

Thank you for your participation.



APPENDIX D
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL

Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board

Date: Tuesday, May 26, 2015
IRB Application No ED1582
Proposal Title: Culturally responsive teaching in art education: a case study (dissertation)

Reviewed and
Processed as: Exempt

Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved Protocol Expires: 5/25/2018

Principal

Investigator(s):

Kevin Thomas
9116 NW 84th St
Yukon, OK 73099

Edward Harris
308 Willard
Stillwater, OK 74078

The IRB application referenced above has been approved. It is the judgment of the reviewers that the rights and welfare of individuals who may be asked to participate in this study will be respected, and that the research will be conducted in a manner consistent with the IRB requirements as outlined in section 45 CFR 46.

- ☒ The final versions of any printed recruitment, consent and assent documents bearing the IRB approval stamp are attached to this letter. These are the versions that must be used during the study.

As Principal Investigator, it is your responsibility to do the following:

1. Conduct this study exactly as it has been approved. Any modifications to the research protocol must be submitted with the appropriate signatures for IRB approval. Protocol modifications requiring approval may include changes to the title, PI advisor, funding status or sponsor, subject population composition or size, recruitment, inclusion/exclusion criteria, research site, research procedures and consent/assent process or forms
2. Submit a request for continuation if the study extends beyond the approval period. This continuation must receive IRB review and approval before the research can continue.
3. Report any adverse events to the IRB Chair promptly. Adverse events are those which are unanticipated and impact the subjects during the course of the research; and
4. Notify the IRB office in writing when your research project is complete.

Please note that approved protocols are subject to monitoring by the IRB and that the IRB office has the authority to inspect research records associated with this protocol at any time. If you have questions about the IRB procedures or need any assistance from the Board, please contact Dawnett Watkins 219 Cordell North (phone: 405-744-5700, dawnett.watkins@okstate.edu).

Sincerely,


Hugh Crethar, Chair
Institutional Review Board

APPENDIX E

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY

Title: Culturally Responsive Teaching in Art Education: A Case Study

Investigator(s): Kevin Thomas, OSU Doctorial Candidate

Purpose: This study will examine culturally responsive teaching in art education in high school visual arts classes. Because many teachers feel inadequate when dealing with issues of race and culture, they often fail to provide effective learning opportunities for all students (Curtis, 1998; Lee, 2013). Without proper training, teachers become overwhelmed with the many cultural differences found in a single classroom. The study will provide the classroom teacher, school administrators, and university preparation programs with the examples of culturally diverse teaching. The results of the study will help teachers develop culturally responsive teaching in the visual arts.

As part of extensive research regarding cultural diverse education, culturally responsive teaching, specifically, provides teachers with a systematic approach for developing equal learning opportunities for all students. Although this systematic approach helpful, more research be done to supply teachers with real life experiences regarding the actual application of the process. This current study will provide two narrative stories of teachers who actively engage in culturally diverse education.

Using culture as a means to build upon existing knowledge has been part of many educational theories for decades (Takaya, 2008; Bruner, 2008). As part of these theories, culturally responsive teaching is becoming part of current teacher practice. The results from the study can potentially add to existing research on cultural responsive teaching and the significant role that the visual have in culturally diverse education.

Because of your expertise for serving the arts in culturally diverse environments, you have been chosen for the study. The process of collecting data will consist of interviews, observations, and the receiving of documentation such as syllabi and lesson plans. The research will be conducted during the summer months and the fall semester of 2015. The interviews will consist of a series of open-ended questions regarding your experience with the visual arts and diverse student backgrounds.

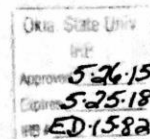
What to Expect:

The research process will include an interview conducted in the summer months and an observation of the teacher working with students. The interview will take one hour. In addition, the researcher will request other documentation that pertains to culturally responsive teaching in art education.

Risks: There are no risks associated with this project which are expected to be greater than those ordinarily encountered in daily life.

Benefits: There are no benefits to the participants in this research other than contributing to the knowledge base of School Improvement Planning for the betterment of educational practices.

Compensation: None



Your Rights and Confidentiality: Your participation in this research is voluntary. There is no penalty for refusal to participate, and you are free to withdraw your consent and participation in this project at any time, without penalty.

Confidentiality: You will not be identified individually; data will be presented as a group rather than individually. As a researcher, I will only receive an Excel® document with responses for each question.

Contacts: You may contact any of the researchers at the following addresses and phone numbers, should you desire to discuss your participation in the study and/or request information about the results of the study:

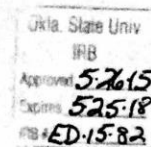
Principal Investigator
Kevin A. Thomas
Doctorial Candidate
Oklahoma State University
KevinAThomas659@yahoo.com
405-285-7443

Committee Chair
Dr. Ed Harris
Professor
Oklahoma State University
ed.harris@okstate.edu
405-744-7932

If you have questions about your rights as a research volunteer, you may contact Dr. Hugh Crethar, IRB Chair, 219 Cordell North, Stillwater, OK 74078, 405-744-3377 or irb@okstate.edu

If you choose to participate: Please, click NEXT if you choose to participate. By clicking NEXT, you are indicating that you freely and voluntarily and agree to participate in this study and you also acknowledge that you are at least 18 years of age.

It is recommended that you print a copy of this consent page for your records before you begin the study by clicking below.



APPENDIX F
INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

Project Title: Culturally Responsive Teaching in Art Education: A Case Study

Investigator: Kevin Thomas, Doctoral Candidate, B.A., M.F.A., Oklahoma State University

Purpose: This study will examine culturally responsive teaching in art education in high school visual arts classes. Because many teachers feel inadequate when dealing with issues of race and culture, they often fail to provide effective learning opportunities for all students (Curtis, 1998; Lee, 2013). Without proper training, teachers become overwhelmed with the many cultural differences found in a single classroom. The study will provide the classroom teacher, school administrators, and university preparation programs with the examples of culturally diverse teaching. The results of the study will help teachers develop culturally responsive teaching in the visual arts.

As part of extensive research regarding cultural diverse education, culturally responsive teaching, specifically, provides teachers with a systematic approach for developing equal learning opportunities for all students. Although this systematic approach helpful, more research be done to supply teachers with real life experiences regarding the actual application of the process. This current study will provide two narrative stories of teachers who actively engage in culturally diverse education.

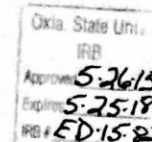
Using culture as a means to build upon existing knowledge has been part of many educational theories for decades (Takaya, 2008; Bruner, 2008). As part of these theories, culturally responsive teaching is becoming part of current teacher practice. The results from the study can potentially add to existing research on cultural responsive teaching and the significant role that the visual have in culturally diverse education.

Because of your expertise for serving the arts in culturally diverse environments, you have been chosen for the study. The process of collecting data will consist of interviews, observations, and the receiving of documentation such as syllabi and lesson plans. The research will be conducted during the summer months and the fall semester of 2015. The interviews will consist of a series of open-ended questions regarding your experience with the visual arts and diverse student backgrounds.

Procedures: Participants may request to have interviews on or off school site or the Putnam City School. If participants choose to be interviewed off campus, there will be a designated area that that has been mutually agreed upon prior to the interviews. Participants will be asked a series of open-ended questions pertaining to culturally responsive teaching in visual art education. All interviews will be recorded to protect the integrity of the participants' responses. Before the interviews, participants will be asked to bring to the interview syllabi, lesson plans, and other documentation pertaining to culturally responsive teaching. Observations will be conducted during the fall semester of 2015 in the art classrooms and at special events associated with visual art education.

Risks of Participation: There are no known risks associated with this project.

Benefits: There are no benefits to the participants in this research other than contributing to the knowledge of visual arts education in secondary education.



Confidentiality:

Pseudonyms will be assigned to all participants their schools to provide the protection anonymity for this study. All data received, recorded, and documented will be secured in a locked cabinet at the home of the researcher. Recordings, the transcriptions, and other documentation from the participants will be kept secure in a password-protected computer that is only be accessed by the researcher. The consent process and the collection of data could possibly be observed by the research oversight staff. This staff at Oklahoma State is responsible for safeguarding the rights and well-being of those participating in the research.

Compensation: None

Contacts: If you have any questions regarding the project, please contact the principal investigator or the committee chair:

Principal Investigator
Kevin A. Thomas
Doctorial Candidate
Oklahoma State University
KevinAThomas659@yahoo.com
405-659-5468

Committee Chair
Dr. Ed Harris
Professor
Oklahoma State University
ed.harris@okstate.edu
405-744-7932

If you have questions about your rights as a research volunteer, you may contact Dr. Hugh Cretchar, IRB Chair, 219 Cordell North, Stillwater, OK 74078, 405-744-3377 or irb@okstate.edu.

Participant Rights: Your participation is voluntary. If you decide to participate, you are free to discontinue participation at any time without reprisal, prejudice, penalty or consequences of any kind.

Signatures:

I have read and fully understand the consent form. I sign it freely and voluntarily. A copy of this form has been given to me.

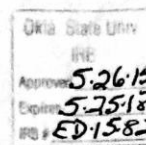
Signature of Participant

Date

I certify that I have personally explained this document before requesting that the participant sign it.

Signature of Researcher

Date



VITA

Kevin Thomas

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Thesis: CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACCHING
IN ART EDUCATION: A CASE STUDY

Major Field: School Administration

Biographical:

Education:

Completed the requirements for the Doctor of Education in
School Administration at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma
in May, 2016.

Completed the requirements for the Master of Fine Arts in Illustration at
Savannah College of Art and Design in April, 1998.

Completed the requirements for the Bachelor of Arts in Advertising Design at
Oklahoma Christian University in December, 1992.

Experience:

Art Educator, Edmond Public School District, 2001-Present.
Adjunct Professor, Oklahoma Christian University, University of Central
Oklahoma, 2001-2010.

Professional Memberships:

Oklahoma Education Association
Edmond Association of Classroom Teachers
National Art Education Association
Oklahoma Art Education Association.